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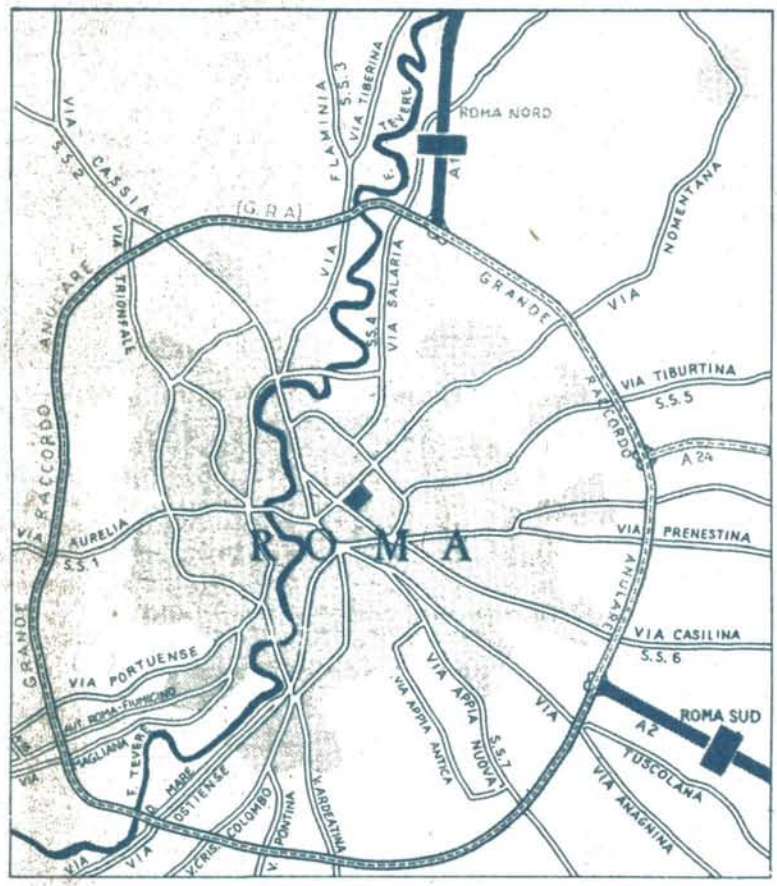

JAMES V. SCHALL

ON LEAVING ROME

DESMOND O'GRADY

REPORTER AT THE VATICAN

FRANK GETLEIN HELMSMEN, WHAT QUARRY?
PETER STEINFELS GOVERNMENT BY WHAT PEOPLE?
LOIS SPEAR CAPITAL PUNISHMENT—OR SUICIDE?
ABIGAIL McCARTHY TORTURE AGAIN
COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR. PERSONALITY PLUS
WILLIAM B. HIXSON, JR. THE TIME
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NEWS & VIEWS

Charles Horman

After four years, the Charles Horman case is suddenly back in the news.

Horman was the young American filmmaker and *Commonweal* writer between 1968-71, who died under mysterious circumstances at the time of the 1973 coup in Chile that overthrew the Popular Unity government headed by Salvador Allende. [News & Views, 12/7/73]

Horman's widow and parents have now filed suit in U.S. District Court in Washington against former Secretary of State Kissinger and a long list of U.S. government and military officials, alleging that they knew of Horman's arrest in time to have tried to save him, and that instead they chose either to condone or to encourage Horman's execution.

Horman's plight and the allegations of the suit are believable only in the light of the international shenanigans that the public has lately discovered to have been American practice unto the most recent past. Actually, the details sound like somethink out of Kafka.

Horman was working on an animated children's film and researching the 1970 kidnapping and murder of General Rene Schneider, Chief of Staff at the time Allende was elected. Ostensibly he uncovered facts relating to U.S. involvement in the Schneider case—facts which did not become known to the American public until the 1975 Report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence was published.

On the day of the coup overthrowing Allende, Horman was in Vina del Mar, adjacent to the headquarters of both the Chilean Navy and the Navy Section of the U.S. Military Group in Valparaiso. There he came upon members of the U.S. Naval Mission who spoke exultantly of American cooperation in the coup. One, it has been revealed, was a retired American engineer, who had been at 15th Naval District headquarters in the Panama Canal Zone. He was quoted as saying, "We came down to do the job and it's done."

Horman obviously had heard too much. Two days after returning to Santiago, he was hauled out of his home and taken to the National Stadium, where he was interrogated by Chilean Military Intelligence and sentenced to death.

The allegation continues that Horman was then taken to the office of the chief of Chilean Military Intelligence, where his sentence was reviewed. At that meeting, just down the hall from the U.S. Military Mission, it was again decided that Horman "knew too much" and must die. A source has an American sitting in on the decision and being actually present when the death sentence was pronounced.

Such is the substance of the Horman story. It only has to be partly accurate to be wholly scandalous.

The Horman family suit was filed on Oct. 6. It specifically charges that Henry Kissinger, as Nixon's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, was involved in planning the coup and had earlier been involved in the kidnapping of General Schneider. It further maintains that Kissinger knew of Horman's arrest, detention and execution, and recommended that no steps be taken to save him. Several of the defendants are said to have "encouraged, suggested and/or actually requested" Horman's execution.

For this, the Hormans are demanding $4,540,000 in punitive and compensatory damages, and are also seeking a court order allowing them to receive "any and all information within the possession of the defendants concerning the death of Charles Horman."

To what end all this?

Not revenge. "What can revenge do?" Horman's father declared. "I don't want this to happen to an American citizen again."

Apart from feelings for a one-time *Commonweal* contributor and the claims of justice, this is reason sufficient in itself to wish the suit success.

Easy Psychology

Returning to the topic of German terrorism and vigilantism [News & Views, 11/11/77], the West German daily *Bild Zeitung* has offered parents a chance to predict whether their children will wind up on the ten-most-wanted list someday. The opportunity comes by way of a "psychological test" allegedly designed to answer the question, "Could your child become a terrorist?"

To take the test, parents simply have to rate scores on a series of questions about the children's family lives and habits, then total up the results. "If your child scores more than 50 points," said *Bild Zeitung*, "she or he is theoretically likely to be infected with terrorist ideas and even to commit violent acts."

Those 50 points aren't hard to come by. A child can be half-way there with yes answers to just two questions: "Does your family have a weak father?" (10 points); "Does your mother dominate?" (15 points).

A child who is "sensitive" picks up another eight points. Asking questions instead of "being happy" costs six points.

Reading habits are also a tip-off. A child who reads Franz Kafka is slapped with three points, while a taste for Wilhelm Busch (a 19th-century comic artist and writer of moral tales) allows one to *subtract* eight points. Busch is obviously a redeeming social value.

But there's not as much moral momentum to Busch as there is to a motorcycle. For any child who belongs to a motorcycle gang, the test allows parents to subtract 10 points.

Peg Averill/LNS

A Scarlet C, No Doubt

The New Yorker for Oct. 24 carried the following newsbreak from the *Lynchburg* (Va.) *News:*

Controversial singer Anita Bryant was on hand at a Lynchburg church Sunday morning to hear its fundamentalist preacher call for a return to the "McCarthy era where we register all Communists."

The singer, who led a fight against a homosexual rights movement in Dade County, Fla., sat on the podium behind Dr. Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church, as he said, "Not only should we register them, but we should stamp it on their foreheads and send them back to Russia.

"This is a free country," he said.

The New Yorker's whimsical comment: "Right on, Reverend!"

Odds and Ends

— *The Chutzpa Award for November* goes to the National Prohibition Party; it is changing its name to the National Statesman Party.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Soap Bubbles

Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

To the Editors: I read with delight Peter Steinfels's piece on *Soap*, muttering, Amen, Amen, between each sentence [Sept. 30]. I would like to add a comment on an unmentioned feature of ABC's defense more repellent to me than all the others.

One of the ABC officials, whose name I have fortunately forgotten, managed to combine his passionate appeals for aesthetic creativity and freedom, with the sanctimonious assurance that, in the long run, (and *long run* seemed his *mot juste*) "no one who did anything wrong would be shown to profit by it." It just takes hanging in there for a few more episodes, while the ratings tick by. Having thus uprooted the Green Bay Tree with one mighty wrench and prompted the Lord, this dextrous executive assured us we would see, before the end, for example, the unfaithful wife suffer from her infidelity; the son, no longer in drag, but with a perfectly well-cut suit, and a girl of his very own.

I don't know to what Degree of Aesthetic Acrobats this raises one who can hunt with the hounds and run with the hare, eating his cake and having it, while balancing water on both shoulders, but it has got to be a very special one. Salut!

JOSEPHINE JACOBSEN

Lager-rhythms

South Nyack, N.Y.

To the Editors: Regarding Raymond A. Schroth's review of *The Taster's Guide to Beer* [16 September 1977]: Adolph Coors's support of "right-wing causes" may well be extravagant, but it's hardly necessary to deplore the man's politics in order to dislike his beer, probably the most overrated potable on the market. And for some four dollars a six-pack, too. Forget the politics and invest in Heinekens—for less money.

MARK TAYLOR

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THE WORLD OF SURVIVAL

A paradox of the nuclear-weapons age is the way the United States goes about advancing war capabilities while negotiating arms treaties, at the same time—unlike adversary superpower Russia—making minimum effort to prepare the general public for life in a post-nuclear-war environment. There are occasional unofficial articles and books, notably Herman Kahn's, which remind that nuclear war is not synonymous with human extermination, that there will be life after The Bomb, and that people would be prudent to be preparing now for surviving the unthinkable. The impulse, however, is to debunk the Kahns and proceed on official levels as though the unthinkable were impossible; therefore, in an age of planning no planning is necessary for what, God forbid!, could be the greatest disaster in history. So Orwellian is the situation that some policy-makers actually regard a comprehensive nuclear-survival civilian defense plan as a negative factor threatening the fragile balance of terror. The civilian population, it seems, must be held vulnerable and uninformed about coping in a post-doomsday world lest the nation be suspect of plotting a preemptive attack.

The foolhardiness of not planning for the day after doomsday is scored by Bruce Douglas Clayton in a recent *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, the journal with the clock in its masthead warning that the world, figuratively speaking, stands at nine minutes to midnight, nuclear doomsday. Clayton challenges two popular myths: the assumption that somehow the arms race will be brought to an end short of nuclear weapons ever being used, a delusionary idea, in his opinion, given the historical proclivity of nations to apply to war the weapons at hand; and the assumption that nuclear war will mean the utter destruction of the warring powers and a high

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probability of the extinction of *homo sapiens*—the so-called no-survivors myth. The fact is, says Clayton, that "barring some totally unknown mechanism, the effects of total warfare today . . . would be unpleasant in the extreme but hardly terminal." His point: the United States should institute programs of survival research aimed at preserving life and making it more possible for people to cope in a hostile post-nuclear-war environment. The Swiss are working in this direction. So, too, the Soviets, their preparations involving evacuation of large urban centers, underground relocation of industry, and extensive shelter and food-storage systems.

Clayton's advice is discomforting, and difficult to dismiss—even though it opens doors once again to the extremes of the fallout-shelter experience of the early 1960s and those hysterical debates about the sanctity of one's shelter and the morality of gunning down neighbors who might intrude and overcrowd it. However, because a national nuclear-defense program was botched then does not mean that a sane, sensible plan should not be developed now for surviving in what will undoubtedly be an acutely radioactive or high-level ultraviolent environment for years, more likely generations, should nuclear war eventuate. For instance, it may be necessary, says Clayton, to switch to nocturnal farming and to adopt Arab-like protective clothing. Other questions for study might be crop resistance to ultraviolet exposure, the advisability of deep-soil farming, radiation-proofing of houses, and the amounts and kinds of food to be best stockpiled.

Catch as these might echoes of 15 years ago, and threaten as they might more such nonsensical responses as then, they are serious topics. Certainly they are not lightly dismissed by Bernard T. Felt, editor-in-chief of the *Bulletin*. In a note accompanying Clayton's article he remarks that serious students of international affairs believe that building nuclear weapons without an equal emphasis on how to survive their effects "is like test flying an untried plane without a parachute." It is the situation the U.S. is in.

Planning for survival after nuclear doomsday is in fact humane and practical. It could be tactical as well, for by catching the public up in discussion and education on the hows and wherefores of survival, arms control and disarmament might be made more of a possibility. Who wants to live in a wasteland? A public aware of the alternatives to nuclear disarmament just might become the force necessary to help bring disarmament about. Right now, whether out of blind ignorance or blind trust, the public is disturbingly passive on the consequences of nuclear war—with only a handful of exceptions: Philip Berrigan, Elizabeth McAlister and other small groups such as theirs. These groups are discounted, lampooned and worse, but they deserve credit for seeing the gravity of the problems and for trying to do something.

In one essential respect those groups cannot be faulted: the primary challenge is not in surviving after doomsday, but in eliminating the very possibility of a nuclear-weapons doomsday through the dismantling of nuclear arsenals. As long as these arsenals exist, there is the threat of their use, whatever the pledges and noble intentions, whatever the careful checks and balances. Herman Kahn, for one, lists more than a dozen scenarios by which a nation might be drawn into thermonuclear war. However, until disarmament is a reality, the unfortunate question of surviving possible use of The Bomb cannot be ducked.

WASHINGTON REPORT

HELMSMEN, WHAT QUARRY?

I picked up the *Times* with a start that Saturday morning. There was Spiro Agnew again, one-column head shot at the top of column one, microphone in front of him, mouth open to show the bottom teeth, querulous, complaining expression, as of one suffering from hemorrhoids. Lost a little weight since last seen. What could the old nabob be nattering about now?

I read the cutline. Shock and horror. It wasn't Agnew at all, it was Richard "Killer" Helms "leaving courthouse," as the caption said, after being socked with a $2,000 fine and two years suspended but on probation and, worse, forced to agree to tell the truth at upcoming trials and investigations into the interesting activities he and his colleagues indulged in when he was *capo di tutti capi* of the CIA.

Well, that was hard cheese on Dickie, all right, but he couldn't complain that the government hadn't done its best to carry out its part of the deal. Griffin Bell's Justice Department, as it is amusingly called, had agreed to try the Killer on a couple misdemeanors instead of the perjury charge that his lies to the United States Senate seem to the ordinary citizen to have richly merited.

For that matter, there is little doubt that if that poor old ordinary citizen had told comparable lies and been found out he would have been up on perjury like a rocket, probably contempt as well. Who was it said—why, it was Jimmy Carter accepting his party's nomination—"I see no reason why big-shot crooks should go free while the poor ones go to jail." Now he sees the reason.

It was, however, Attorney-General Griffin Bell who

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made the biggest ass of himself in the whole affair and did so completely unnecessarily. Let us take it as given that the fix was in, Helms's wrist-slap reprimand agreed to by all parties for reasons now clear to Jimmy Carter if not to the rest of us. Bell's minions hustled Helms into court hugger-mugger, with no notice to press or public. Bell's patsy in the case, Benjamin R. Civiletti, head of the Criminal Division, lodged the misdemeanor charge and Helms was allowed to plead *nolo contendere*, in the style made famous by Spiro Agnew and Richard Kleindienst, another Attorney-General who knew the reason big-shot crooks go free while poor ones go to jail.

Granted that, all Bell had to do was shut up, perhaps go off to a law conference in Belgrade, at the very most say to the press, Look, fellows, the fix is in, Helms is being let off and that's all I'm going to say about it, go peddle your papers.

Instead, flamboyantly betraying his own inner feelings of deep unease about the whole thing, Bell couldn't keep his mouth shut. He kept bobbing up on television and in the press defending the indefensible, justifying the unjustifiable and generally carrying on like W. C. Fields explaining why he'd no sooner part with these gilt-edged certificates than sell his grandmother's paisley shawl.

Probably Bell's funniest line—the whole act was hilarious, but there's always one topper—was the one in reply to Senator Church and Washington wags who thought it particularly good that Bell had sprung the head spook on Hallowe'en, that such criticisms "don't set well with me." Good grief, if criticism doesn't set well with you, don't pull deals that people are naturally going to criticize. Or, if you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen, go back to Georgia, where courthouse loungers have always known the reason why big shot crooks go free. As Attorney General, Bell has a lot to learn about equal justice for all, but as an official of any kind, he has a lot to learn about democracy. Criticism is what makes it work. Suppression of criticism is what turns it into something else, as the "Chilean friends" Helms lied allegedly to protect demonstrate daily. It's the stupidity more than the arrogance that appalls.

In doing the number again and again apparently without serious rehearsal, Bell got off quite a few schoolboy howlers. One was his opinion that by pleading *nolo contendere* Helms had "saluted the law." He saluted the law all right, in the classic salute of the thumb to the nose. Granted that Bell was certainly not going to prosecute Helms on any serious charge, what could Helms have done that would not show his respect for the law, as Bell insists the liar, perjurer and bon vivant has done? Flee the country, seeking political asylum with those Chilean friends who now rule that unhappy land? O. K. for a while, but suppose democracy gets back in? Helms would be finished. And besides, he'd forfeit his pension, the saving of which seems to have been the principal concern of Carter, Bell, Helms himself, of course, and most of the Washington press corps that has so deliriously sung the praises of the big shot and those who have let him go free for their Solomonic wisdom. Besides turning into Spiro Agnew, poor Helms is also turning into one of those endearing old eccentrics in Trollope's alms house, clinging to the pension he's entitled to. It's come to that.

Bell also stated his belief several times that Helms's example would make honest, truth-telling, law-abiding men of all future CIA directors. That's quite a transformation, when you consider the record. That hope turns Bell into Little Orphan Annie singing "Tomorrow." In effect, Bell is saying, "Look, Mr. Future Director, you better obey the law 'cuz if you don't you'll have to plead *nolo contendere* to a matched pair of misdemeanors, so watch it, Jack!" To which, if the past predicts the future, the reply: "I'm terrified, Mr. Attorney-General, and if you'll just turn to the wall and raise your arms, I'll calm my trembling by lifting the Constitution you carelessly carry around in your money belt and while I'm at it, I'll slip out your false teeth thus getting rid of your bite and, oh, yes, I double-parked while pulling this heist and I'd like to plead *nolo contendere* to the ticket."

The basic reasoning of the fix—or at least the basic reasoning of the story put out by Bell—is that if Helms had been put on trial, he would have been forced to reveal CIA secrets in order properly to defend himself. This argument persuaded both Washington's conservative papers, the *Star* and the *Post*, and any number of columnists of the wisdom of the deal.

But back that up a minute. The reason Helms lied to the Senate, he has said, is that he took a mighty oath not to reveal CIA secrets; moreover, revealing those secrets would imperil the lives of agents and of some of "our Chilean friends," then working feverishly for the overthrow of that country's elected government, the installation of a good old reliable military dictator. What these two things seem to indicate is that Helms will lie his head off to the Senate he is supposed to tell the truth to, but sing like a mocking-bird in order to save his own ass.

Now run it forward a minute. Immediately after the sentencing outside the courtroom, Helms said he was proud of lying to the Senate. But the Judge—whose concern for justice was greater than that of the Justice Department—had exacted from Helms the promise to tell the truth at upcoming trials. Will Helms lie at those trials? If so, can he be put in jail for violating probation? Will he tell the truth? If so, what will this do to agents and Chilean friends? Questions, questions, questions, but one answer does seem true: Helms can learn a lot about criminal loyalty from Gordon Liddy.

FRANK GETLEIN

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FROM NORTH CAROLINA

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT—OR SUICIDE?

Once again Death Row in Raleigh's Central Prison has residents. James Calvin Jones, 35, and Daniel R. Webster, 51, are the first two men to receive the death penalty under the state's new legislation which became effective on June 1 of this year. Jones, a Lumbee Indian from Robeson County, was convicted of armed robbery in 1967. While out on pass after being returned to prison for parole violation, according to District Attorney Joe Freeman Britt, Jones killed another Indian, Jimmy Locklear, 68, by shooting him in the back with a 22-caliber rifle. Execution date for Jones is set for January 20, 1978, but state law provides for automatic appeal.

Lawyers in the case represent conflicting philosophies on capital punishment and the social backgrounds which tend to produce them. Britt, who successfully prosecuted the state's case against Jones, was responsible, under North Carolina's earlier death penalty legislation, for legal cases that sent 20 defendants to death row. Jones's defense attorney, state representative Horace Locklear (no relation to the victim), is the first American Indian admitted to the N.C. bar. Locklear, an opponent of capital punishment, is a graduate of North Carolina Central University in Durham, a state-funded, predominately black institution that has received considerable criticism because of the number of its graduates who fail to pass the legal certification examination.

Webster, the second man on death row, has been in and out of jail since 1948, chiefly on breaking and entering charges. He was convicted of murdering his wife as she prepared the evening meal. According to Webster's father-in-law, Major Beauchamps, the defendant was fascinated with the case of Gary Gilmore, the Utah man executed earlier this year. "He (Webster) read everything he could get his hands on about it and was mean as the devil after that," Beauchamps said. During his trial, Webster took the stand and taunted the jury saying, "If I'm not given the death sentence, you are a disgrace to the state of North Carolina." On another day when he felt the trial was taking too long, Webster interrupted the proceedings by jumping to his feet and shouting, "I'm spending more time out of this courtroom than in it. I'll be dead of old age before this trial is over with, at the rate you are going."

The state's capital punishment statute that put Jones and Webster on death row replaces an earlier one that had 122 people in Central Prison's maximum security unit at the time when the law was overturned by the July, 1976 Supreme Court decision. The new legislation is similar to enactments by Florida and Georgia. The jury must decide, not only on the guilt or innocence of the defendant, but also on what the punishment should be. In the second hearing, the jury may consider selected aggravating circumstances and an unlimited array of mitigating circumstances before deciding between execution or a long prison term.

The state has a small group of death penalty opponents who have joined together in a loose confederation, the N.C. Coalition Against the Death Penalty. Composed largely of church groups such as the Council of Churches, the American Friends Service Committee, and the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice, the organization also includes the N.C. Association of Black Lawyers—and from inmates, the N.C. Hard Times Prison Project and N.C. Political Prisoners Committee. Though both of the state's Catholic dioceses have joined the Council of Churches, no Catholic organization has as yet allowed its name to be added to the Coalition's masthead.

Though death penalty opponents will try every means to get their message across to the state's population, the Webster case points up the most persuasive argument they can use: In states with death penalty legislation, mentally disturbed people may be tempted to commit murder to fulfill their own death wishes. The theory is an old one. A 1767 Danish law provides that capital punishment not be ordered for "melancholy and other dismal persons" who commit murder "for the exclusive purpose of losing their lives." The theory linking capital punishment with suicidal inclinations was documented in a 1968 survey finding that, in states with death penalty laws, there was a ratio of .58 first degree murders in a population of 100,000 compared with a .21 per 100,000 population in states without such legislation. Dr. Louis Jolyon West, head of the department of Psychiatry at University of California at Los Angeles, and Dr. Bernard L. Diamond, psychiatrist at the Berkeley Campus, consider state death penalty statutes comparable to "contracts," guaranteeing to anyone who wants to commit suicide but who hasn't the nerve to go through with it, that the state will step in and perform the suicide for him.

No doubt the above information will be circulated as the major strategy of the N.C. Coalition Against the Death Penalty as it seeks to hinder implementation of the new statute. Judging by popular support of capital punishment and the comfortable margins with which the state legislature passed the enactment, the Coalition will have a difficult year ahead. LOIS SPEAR

(Sister Lois Spear, O.P., teaches in the History Department of St. Augustine College in Raleigh.)

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TORTURE AGAIN

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

The National Council of Catholic Laity called for the observance of human rights week this year (October 16-22) and the call was endorsed by the American bishops' committee on the laity. At almost the same time a series of repressive acts on the part of the government of South Africa provoked debate as to action in this country and at the United Nations. In both cases our international dilemma was once again underlined.

The truth is that there is much greater outcry and more organized indignation over the abrogation of human rights in some countries than in others. This seems especially true in the area of the United Nations. Many people, especially those with blood and religious ties to other countries, see this as outright hypocrisy. Those with business ties make such selectivity on the part of the majority an excuse for withholding pressure on any offending government.

The Council of the Laity sought to solve the problem by designing a program which stressed the expressed concern of the bishops in a broad spectrum of countries: in eastern Europe, Chile, Brazil, the Philippines, Africa, the Mid East and here in the United States. *"The time for action,"* said the Council, *"is here."* The range of human rights cited from various of the bishops' statements over the years was, of course, staggering in view of their worldwide abrogation. Political rights, economic rights, social rights—minority rights, the rights of women and children—the right to religious liberty. We are left asking: "How can we possibly speak and act effectively in the face of such diverse and widespread injustice. The tendency is to fall back on exhortations to government and church authorities, and the multinational corporations."

A more practical approach was suggested in an editorial in the New York *Times* which addressed our government's dilemma over South Africa. The writer admitted the hypocritical attitude of many member nations of the UN but pointed out that in the international world of dealing among nations one moved ahead with what was possible. There was, and is now, evidently a consensus for moving ahead with pressure on South Africa. Institutionalized racism, suggested the editorial, was one aspect of the abrogation of human rights which has become almost universally untenable. That it has—if it finally has—is the result, it seems to me, of a steady drumbeat of many different forces concentrating on racism over many years. It is a matter of focus.

Should it not be equally possible for us to focus and organize our efforts and that of our worldwide community of action so that the most widespread, the most evil, the most foul abrogations of human rights—that of the sadistic, officially-countenanced torture of human beings—be equally the target of international consensus? Amnesty International, so richly deserving of the Nobel Prize awarded it this year, has shown us the way.

Amnesty, world-wide, and independent of any government, acts as a living reminder to all nations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It reminds us that that declaration was born out of the ashes of World War II, "out of the memory of millions tortured, gassed, burned, brutally maimed," and that it is one of the most important documents in world history. Above all Amnesty keeps our eyes on the fate of prisoners of conscience. "It's a subject a lot of people close their eyes to," writes Ginetta Sagan, a former victim of Nazi torture in an Amnesty appeal. "Torture is too disturbing to read about. . . ." But the letter is explicit:

> In Communist countries, in Western countries, in Third World countries, innocent victims who never used or advocated violence suffer unspeakable physical and mental agonies inflicted upon them by government police.
>
> Some countries prefer pumping soapy water into the victim's stomach and forcing it out through his nostrils.
>
> Others choose to beat the soles of the victim's feet until they are a bloody pulp.
>
> Others torture their victims with drugs or deprive them of sleep for as long as two weeks.
>
> Still others place dissenters in mental institutions.

And yet this list is mildly stated in comparison to the detailed accounts in the documentation available to any concerned person.

Perhaps the worst thing about the worldwide use of torture, according to Jeri Laber, a member of the Committee for the Abolition of Torture, is that the techniques and implements used are so strikingly similar that they suggest an international exchange of experience and information. (Recent revelations have made it clear that our own international police schools and intelligence agencies may have been party to this dissemination—perhaps to the extent of actually training torturers, euphemistically called "interrogators.")

The effect on the torturers themselves is bizarre, but horribly indicative of the depravity of which man is capable. "They may actually perceive themselves as practitioners of an ancient, established profession instead of the sadistic criminals they are. [They] venture forth each day

(Continued on page 767)

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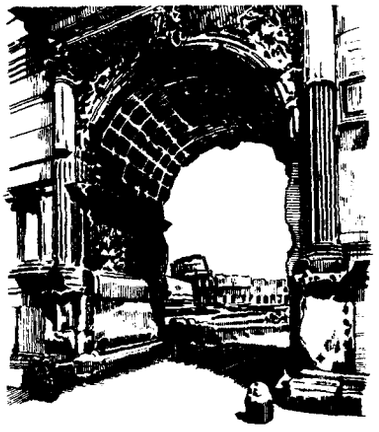
ON LEAVING ROME

JAMES V. SCHALL



The only 'real' city in the world

Rome, according to its most sentimental song, is a place to which we fondly say "Good-bye—Arrivederci" on leaving it. Not everyone who has ever left this "Eternal City," of course, has preserved a sense of nostalgia about it. Martin Luther, for instance, who stayed at the Augustinian Convent on the Piazza del Popolo, had this to say in 1520 in his *Appeal to the Ruling Class:* "The Romanists themselves have coined the saying, 'The nearer Rome, the worse the Christians. . . .' Another saying runs, 'The first time one goes to Rome, one has to look for a rogue; the second time, one finds him; the third time, one brings him back. . . .' Indeed, in Rome they have coined for us this catch-phrase, 'It would be better not to have seen or known Rome. . . .'" And the great Horace, who escaped the Great City to his near-by Sabine Farm, wrote in ancient times to his villa foreman:

> Once, a laborer, you prayed heaven for the country,
> and now, a foreman, you long for the city, the baths, the circus.
> You know I am consistent. I always leave with a sigh
> whenever loathsome business drags me back to Rome.
> Our ideals differ then. . . . (*Ep.* I, 14)

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And Rome is still a place whose value, on going and coming, depends upon our ideals.

Yet, dreams are often of much less wonder than reality, while reality itself is something of a dream, something that might not have been. When I was a boy back at Knoxville High, I might have heard something of Rome. Certainly, it was not a pressing topic of conversation in Marion County, Iowa. We had, nevertheless, for some now unaccountable reason, two years of Latin from Miss Cooper. But I never understood a word of it. True, I was one of the few Roman Catholics in town so I must have had some conception of the then far-off place. I even recall once a heated debate with some local Jehovah Witnesses, who claimed ominously that the Black Flag of the Roman Catholic Church was flying on some invading fleet or other. At the time, I somehow knew that the Papal flag was Yellow and White—and triumphantly told them so—but, alas, I had not a clue as to why there might be a Papal flag in the first place. The idea that I might actually live in Rome for over a decade never crossed my midwestern mind, which at the time had never been beyond East Dubuque, Illinois.

Yet, *here I stand,* rather unlike the way Martin Luther used that same phrase, graduate of the Class of '45 from KHS now in the Summer of '77, ending a seemingly short but also long period of twelve years at the Gregorian University in the heart of classical Rome, just up from the Trevi Fountains, a few blocks from the Forum and the Campidoglio, down the hill from the Palazzo Quirinale, Renaissance and Enlightenment home of popes, present home of the Italian Head of State. The Biblical Institute is just across the Piazza as

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is the lovely Church of the Twelve Apostles, where Clement XIV, the man who once suppressed the Jesuits still lies, along with the great composer Frescobaldi, and I do not know who else, its crypt is full of the bones of martyrs. The expelled Stuarts of England lived in the Palace at the far corner by the Dodici Apostoli, while Napoleon's mother one block over on the Corso had her residence.

Eventually, I will return to the Government Faculty at Georgetown University in Washington, where I did my doctoral studies during Mr. Eisenhower's second administration. I was obliquely reminded of this not too long ago when down by the Trevi, I ran into a large number of slightly tipsy German soccer fans from Moenchen-Gladbach in town for the European Cup of Champions against Liverpool. Moenchen-Gladbach was the famous Catholic Social Center from which Professor Heinrich Rommen, who directed my thesis, finally came to Georgetown after escaping Hitler's growing power. *Urbi et Orbi.*

Of course, during many of these same years, I have also spent the Fall Semester at the University of San Francisco, so I may not be totally "Romanized," the ultimate clerical sin. In any case, whatever the attractions of Washington by contrast—Professor William O'Brien at Georgetown had his doubts if there were any—I do not doubt that Rome and San Francisco are the loveliest dwelling places our kind has fashioned in its wisdom—and its folly. Both are worldly and spiritual, simultaneously provincial to a fault and international—cosmic, even. A drink at the Top of the Mark on a clear late afternoon with the Bay or Golden Gate Bridge below on the horizon leaves no doubt that few other places are worth even bothering with.

And yet, when I read in Stendhal's *Roman Journal,* a book I love, what he wrote on Christmas, 1827, I can even still agree with him without hesitation: "I have never seen anything so imposing as this ceremony; St. Peter's was sublime in magnificence, and beauty. The effect of the dome especially seemed to me wonderful (in his day, it was lighted with many oil lamps); I was almost as much a believer as a Roman." This last spring, I attended the Easter Vigil Service in St. Peter's. What Stendhal forgot to mention was that the place was sublime *and* chaotic at the same time—the true sign, I have come to suspect, both of humanity and of Catholicism. Thus, this year, at that precise magnificent moment when the huge basilica should still have been in complete darkness at the last "Lumen Christi" so that the whole vast interior would glow and dance in the light of the thousands of candles held by the faithful, someone prematurely turned on the bright-as-day overhead flood lights to destroy the whole effect. Beauty betrays its most divine origins, I thought after the manner of Augustine, at the precise moment it is most fragile, most likely to be ruined.

Rome, it strikes me, is the only "real" city in the world. Though I enjoy the countryside as much as Horace, I must say I am more touched by this vital "Babylon," as Peter called it in his Epistle, this place that was not, as Chesterton said, first loved because it was great, but became great because men first loved it. This, of course, is the exact symbolic status we Christians have in Christian theology. We are not loved because we are first lovable but rather we are lovable because we are first loved. And so, compared with Rome, San Francisco and Washington, Paris and Berlin are but of yesterday. Rome is the only city that has been constantly lived in and constantly been important for most of its 2730 years. There are cities older than Rome perhaps, Chinese and Indian ones, cities once more famous—Athens, for instance, and even Jerusalem—but none has its constant world-historic significance in almost every age and generation, for almost every people. Thus, here in Rome, no one can walk around the corner without being conscious of a good part of mankind's history.

Rome, consequently, is an infinite place. No man can comprehend it. This is one of the reasons, I think, why I have most appreciated it. The Eternal City seems to me justly symbolic of my own finiteness, a place where I could live out all my allotted years and days and still barely begin to comprehend it all. This is a place of the most annoying pettinesses and equally extraordinary vistas. Here it is easy to be a romantic and a cynic in order finally to glimpse the wisdom beyond both. Gregorovius, who did not at all like Pope Pius IX, tells of being in St. Peter's on Palm Sunday, 1860, for the procession which had to pass through two notices of excommunication posted on the main gate pillars. He continued:

> By chance above these notices, there were two others, earlier ones, in which we were encouraged not to blaspheme. Immediately above the Pope's excommunication (for those at war against the fast-declining Papal States), we read: "Blasphemers! Do Penance! Think well on it! In the very moment of your blasphemy you will be tossed down into hell!"

If I thought for a moment such a marvelous sign were still up, I should hustle over to St. Peter's to find it before I left, even though I do not consider blasphemy to be one of my major vices.

So if Rome is sublime and mysterious, it is also small and narrow-minded too. Stendhal noted in his Journal on June 26, 1828, in words still largely true: "It should be observed that Rome is more of a small town than Dijon or Amiens; not everything is told, but everything is found out." And Gregorovius quipped of a great French bishop: "Dupanloup d'Orleans preaches every day in the Church of the Gesù—they say he is a 'chiacchierone,' a chatterbox, a yaker." And even more

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maliciously on July 3, 1861, when it seemed the Papal States would finally be lost, he remarked: "Today is the Vigil of the Feast of St. Peter. On this day it is customary to distribute a medal: the one today bears on one side the portrait of the Pope (Pius IX) and on the other, the significant effigy of Daniel in the Lion's Den." And yet, when Gregorovius himself arrived back in Rome from Germany in the Fall of 1863, the great historian also was moved by the spell of the City: "I arrived in Rome yesterday at 12:30. Now I have already reordered everything. My manuscripts which were deposited in the Archives of the Embassy and which were humid, I have exposed to dry out so tomorrow I will begin again my eternal work in the Eternal City." And yet, when I read Gregorovius, I cannot help being reminded of those classical lines of Horace in which in a Roman scene, he depicted forever the nature of a bore:

> Walking along the Sacred Road, as is my habit,
> I was reflecting on some trifle, quite engrossed
> when up comes somebody known to me only by name,
> and grabs my hand. . . .

Perhaps that is part of Rome's grandeur, even bores are wondrous figures along the Via Sacra, while distinguished bishops are chatterboxes in the Gesù.

Changes

But life goes on in Rome. Not so long ago, Al Capp showed the old postman on the U.S. Mule riding up to Dogpatch to shout to L'il Abner, "Special Delivery from the Govamint." And Abner, in return, weeps, "O, Bless the Govamint! They is so prompt wif their mail." In Rome, too, I have often wept over the mail, but *never* because it was prompt! Undoubtedly, one of the mysteries not resolved this side of Paradise is how much of my correspondence did not get through. Peter Nichols, in a recent issue of that phenomenal *Famiglia Christiana* —by far the largest circulating magazine in Italy—tells in an article on the Italian post of an Englishman in frustration going up to an Italian postal clerk and chiding him for his inefficiency and lackadaisical attitude. "Don't you know you are a public servant?" the Englishman asked with what he thought was the ultimate logic. The clerk was insulted. The last thing he conceived himself to be was a public servant. One of the sobering things about living in Italy over the years is the brutal realization that the ordinary citizen is too often at the mercy of the bureaucrat. The "public servant" owes his job to the party and to union power. Public service has nothing to do with it. And when something finally is done for someone, he goes away with the feeling that he received a "favor," not his due as a citizen. Service is thus a function of clout, not a practical politics based on effective popular sovereignty. The old Roman notion of the client—"I'll take care of you"—is one of the most abiding facts of life in these parts. No ideology is immune from it, least of all marxism.

When I ask myself what is the most striking change in Italy during the years I have been here, I think I would have to say it is a distinct change in the manners, especially among the young. There seems less joy and vitality, more fear. There is an unaccustomed harshness in present Italian culture. The Italians, of course, have always reserved their real selves for their families and intimate friends. The "bella figura" of the Italian in public is not always his best self. The state has always been "the enemy," even the Italian version of the democratic polity. No one has dared to trust anyone beyond his own narrow circle. What seems new is the attention given, especially by the marxists in the tradition of Gramsci, to culture. The "social" has come to be seen as the vital area of struggle and change. Politics and economics are left aside in this revisionism which gives Italian marxism its claim to be the real wave of the future. The older Christian customs and ideals are being replaced by confrontation, mass indoctrination, ideological slogans, a brutality that is contrary to the classical Italian character.

After years of watching university students—"the sons of the rich in the left universities battling the sons of the poor in the police," as the present Interior Minister bluntly put it—march down the Corso or the Via Nazionale or into the Piazza Navona, all in red with signs of "Death to This," "Struggle against That," "Away with the Other Thing," it is hard to escape the impression that the bloody rhetoric has had its somber effect on the sign-bearers. There is something, I think, to the old spiritual principle that what comes out of the mouth is more important than what goes in. Recent months have been filled with university riots, shootings of police and independent journalists. This violence comes directly from a generation healthier and better taken care of than any previously in Italian history. So much for an economic view of history. Salvatore Scarpino has graphically described a situation not sufficiently appreciated outside Italy, certainly not by current American policy:

> In the great majority of cases, then, the youth do not suffer any real need. They are ignorant of what malnutrition and unhealthy environment mean, the very elements that have conditioned the youth of millions of Italians of earlier decades. Filled with vitamins, free, socially respectable, emancipated, many students of the schools only, in these confused days, succeed in expressing a desperate desire for violence and death, stylized in their paramilitary uniforms, in their light knapsacks of books, a military-syndical language of struggle, attack, strategy, and swelling with funereal

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and scatological images. . . . And words become deeds. . . .

No, the economic crisis cannot explain by itself their attitudes, nor can anxiety and the desire of change, attitudes proper to all youth. This cannot render comprehensible a cult so crude, irrational, and distinctive as the revolution understood as violence without end.

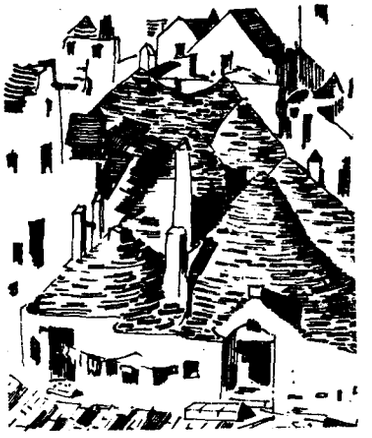
We must look elsewhere to comprehend such a widely diffused refusal of life and history. We must look to that no man's land which the Italian school has become in recent years. In this elephantine apparatus in which a million public employees work, there has been effected a systematic action of cultural disintegration that has no precedent. The school has become an autonomous social body, cut off from the rest of the country, something which has developed its own ethic and culture. . . .

In an Italy institutionally liberal and pluralistic . . . we have allowed to grow and settle a plagiarist, class-conscious, sectarian school in which there is no longer place for dissent or debate. For research is substituted indoctrination, naturally revolutionary and progressivist, for teaching is substituted idle talk on themes imposed by minority factions. (*Il Giornale*, 28 Maggio 1977)

There is no doubt that this violent, anti-democratic attitude dominates Italian scholastic and cultural life. It is prevalent not just in the schools but also in the media, publishing houses and unions.

There has always been a certain civil violence in Italy, to be sure, though far less in terms of, say, murder than the average American can possibly imagine. Almost any two major American cities have more murders per year than all of Italy combined. Italian vices, for the most part, when they are not ideological-political, are petty ones—pickpocketing, cheating a bit. The Italian always likes to appear well. And there is something nice about this quality which insists that we should always look our best with whatever nature, grace and style might have bestowed on us. Vanity is not the worst of vices. And if any American city after six p.m. were as orderly as the most "violent" Italian one, the local police would feel they had already entered into the peaceable kingdom.

Yet, as I have just indicated, universities and high schools are caught up in a kind of programmed political violence that has radically changed the intrinsic outlook of the younger generation. Even the Communists are worried about it, as well they might be, since they are its major cause and hoped to be its major beneficiary. Angelo Sterrazza, commenting on the total decline of democratic, European-oriented youth organizations founded optimistically after World War II, wrote in *Il Popolo*'s Issue on the 20th Anniversary of the Common Market (25 Marzo 1977): "The idea of the unity of Europe has lost any sort of attraction among the youth during the past ten years. . . ." This is true, I think, of Italian youth in particular. The remarkably gracious style that once characterized the Italians is clearly eroding. The slogans of the university scholars are as intellectual as the blood, death and hatred they repeat *ad nauseam*. The roots of the culture, I fear, have yielded up the very Christian and Roman presuppositions that historically grounded Italian culture and made Rome such a pleasant place to live. This should not be over-stated, to be sure, but the distinct tendency is there. Europe, as a Christendom, finds few followers. And even Europe as a series of truly "democratic"



societies is declining. The apparent gains in Spain and Portugal are offset by the growing power of the French and Italian left. The reason for this is ultimately spiritual. When the kind of ideas and practices classically defined as non-Christian become the *modus procedendi* of the universities, no amount of warning will suffice. It is no accident that the Russian exiles have the greatest difficulty in speaking here. Perhaps Solzhenitsyn is not wrong in claiming that many must first suffer an evil to know it.

Yet, in many ways, Christendom and what it means is being rediscovered. There is a thesis in Italy that sees the family being rediscovered in the light of the radical decline of male and female religious orders which have historically supplied much of the religious context of Italian life. Too, when Italy was formed in the time of Pius IX, it was believed by the liberals and progressives of the era that science, democracy of an indifferentist hue, evolution and secularism would solve all. Pius IX has been roundly condemned for a century for daring to say that the Church could not be reconciled with "modern civilization" as understood in such philosophies. Almost exactly one hundred years after the death of Pius IX, it is not the pope but the whole modern culture that is shouting that modern civilization is failing. Ben Wattenberg's long collection of contemporary condemnations of modern civilization in the first chapter of *The Real America* deserves reading

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in this light. And if we take the trouble to read with attention E. F. Schumacher's list in *Small Is Beautiful* of 19th Century ideas that tragically dominate the minds of educated people even yet, they will sound like nothing so much as the *Syllabus of Errors*.

Over twenty years ago, I wrote a short essay in *Commonweal* on "The Future of Distributism." (6 May 1955) Today, ideas of distribution, small and medium technology, nature and person-oriented economics are reappearing everywhere. These are the heritage of certain strands of medieval economics and the central line of modern papal social thought. The paradox is that we Catholics in social and political fields have in the meantime mostly abandoned our central tradition in favor of a kind of chic keeping up with the radical left ideologies of the past decade, only to find the ideas we abandoned to be proposed more and more as the key to the Third World problem—the ostensible reason why we abandoned specifically Catholic social thought in the first place. "Pluralism" for which we argued and fought for years has come largely to mean a single option. I suspect the *Outline of Sanity* is still more radically pertinent than all of our modernization theories which opt for socialist mobilization and ideological conformity. *The Servile State* may be much more to the point today than when it was written at the beginning of this century.

But there is more. Schumacher's central point is not social, but ontological and religious. Our first problem is not social action but speculative metaphysics, which can establish our being as both real and finite, given and structured, permanent in its passing. The metaphysics of "making ourselves to be men," the metaphysics of atheism, is ultimately the force behind so much of our development and ecological movements. If I have anything sharply negative to say about the trends in the Church in recent years, it has to do with its practical giving up of Christian metaphysics as the basis of the intellectual program taught in the universities and seminaries ostensibly controlled by Catholics. This has been voluntary on our part. No one has taken our mind from us. Malcolm Muggeridge was probably right when he chided that just about the time the world will get around to wanting the essence of classical Christian thought, it will discover that Christian intellectuals no longer know their origins. The opening out onto the world—the themes of John XXIII and the Council—has too often in the meantime come to mean a rejection of an independent, valid Christian tradition and thought that is not "the world." There are remarkably few centers of specifically Christian learning left and these are under tremendous pressure to teach developmental ideology as *the* Christian dogma. The valid side of this effort to relate Christianity to all knowledge is obvious enough. Indeed, I would hold that, more and more, a valid, independent Christian metaphysics is the only thing that can justify and save modern "science," once thought to be the enemy of faith. Now it may well be that the only thing that can save science from ideology is classical faith. But Christianity is itself, with its own sources, methods and moods. Grace does build on nature, and this means it is not nature.

During the years I have been in Rome, I would judge that the most important theological movement has been the increasingly successful effort to convert Christianity into a kind of social action, phrased generally in terms of marxist categories. (Cf. my, "Political Theory and Political Theology," *Laval Théologique et Philosophique*, Février, 1975.) Existentialism, logical positivism, structuralism, evolutionism, language analysis and Protestantism have largely seen their intellectual forces dissipated. Twelve years ago, still the most difficult persons to convert to marxism were young army officers and Roman Catholic seminarians. Today, I suspect, especially if they are Latin, they are the easiest. This comes at a time when the best and most widespread testimony from within actual marxist states, especially Russia and Eastern Europe, indicates that few if any believe in this ideology. Perhaps the best test of my thesis in any case in Europe, America and the Third World, is to look at book publishers and reviews published under apparently "Catholic" auspices. The number with clearly marxist presuppositions grows each year.

The Papacy

Too, after living in Rome for a time, the automatic and, I suppose, logical question is where does the papacy fit into it all? Rome, in spite of Garibaldi and Count Cavour, is still in many ways the papacy, even when it is not. The Italian State has yet to build in Rome anything that comes close to the grandeur and style of the buildings of papal Rome. One hundred years may not be enough for a fair comparison, of course, but the real reason is that modern liberal and marxist Italy does not believe in beauty or its civil causes as the papacy did. And it remains true that Italy's greatest single "natural" resource is the artistic heritage of the popes. Destroy these—by strikes, inconvenience, inefficiency, or neglect—and Italy becomes just another Mediterranean country. Classical Rome, no doubt, also remains in remains, whereas a pope still lives in St. Peter's. A Gibbon sitting on the steps of the Ara Coeli, one-sidedly judging the decline of Rome was due to the faith, would receive a shock to his thesis looking not South to the Forum but North to the Monumento Vittorio Emmanuele. Even though this much abused shrine is not all that bad, Gibbon today would be much more hesitant in deciding what was falling and what rising.

These have been the years of Giovanni Battista

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Montini. The most vivid memory of how ecclesiastical Rome works was during my first year here. Paul VI's Lenten Address that year touched on wearing clerical garb. According to *L'Osservatore Romano,* as I understood it, Paul reaffirmed that the "traditional" garb of the cleric in Rome is the cassock, which I wore as little as possible. The day after this seemingly somber talk, I walked into my class, usually filled with cassock- and habit-wearing priests and seminarians. Much to my astonishment, practically everyone was in natty suits and ties or sport clothing, if Americans. To my univocal mind, this seemed either defiant or amusing. As it turned out, it was neither. These now suddenly civilian-clad clerics informed me that the Pope had said that the *traditional* garb is to be maintained on clerical occasions. That meant that in any non-clerical situation, it was optional. And certainly going to class at the Gregorian was a non-clerical function! From that day forward, I had a new respect for the legal mind. The so-called "Roman" Collar, in any case, is not Roman. To the Italian, it is Protestant. I have had many delightful discussions with ordinary Italians trying to convince them that, even in a Roman Collar, I was a Roman Catholic like themselves.

During my first year in Rome too (1965), I clearly recall the scene in St. Peter's Square on the last day of Vatican II. The Document on Religious Liberty and *Gaudium et Spes* had just been signed. Pope Paul greeted numerous people from various nations and walks of life during the Offertory of the Mass. Perhaps the most touching moment for me was his being introduced to Jacques Maritain. At that time, Maritain was still considered the model of Christian intelligence, the spirit of the liberalizing movement that incorporated humanism into Christianity, religious liberty into Catholic thought. Twelve years later, Maritain is looked upon by too many as reactionary, while the cause of religious liberty is mostly a dead letter. Catholics as a group have done practically nothing for fellow Catholics suffering precisely from lack of religious liberty. There has never been less religious liberty in the world, in many ways. Indeed, the great two-century battle to accept the civil principle of religious freedom has been largely set aside by current ideological movements which claim to work for "this-worldly" development. Ironically, almost the very day that development became the catchword of modern political thought, religious freedom began to fall on hard days—and it has never had very easy ones.

Paul VI, who will be 80 in September, has been severely judged by my contemporaries. According to varying ideologies and presuppositions, there are several clashing views about him. Probably the first is that he has been too liberal. *Populorum Progressio* (1963) is seen to be merely a baptism of Père Lebret's anti-Americanism. Paul raps the knuckles of an insignificant Archbishop Lefebvre but does nothing about the marxists in the fold. A second view, then, is that Paul has not gone far left enough. *Octogesima Adveniens* pulled in his horns. But the cure of the world's ills lies supposedly in marxism and socialism. Paul has not seen the wave of the future. There is no Catholic social doctrine so why not opt for the method that is taking over anyhow? Thirdly, there is the anti-*Humanae Vitae* school, which judges the validity of the papacy on this one issue. And in this case, with much superficial analysis, he is seen to have been wrong. Yet, what is frightening about *Humanae Vitae* is not how wrong it was but how right. We have seen in these past twelve years, laws and mores come about pretty much as Paul predicted. When the period began, the doctor who induced abortion was illegal. When the period ends, the one who does not is more and more held to be violating a woman's "right." Finally, from the opposite angle, Paul has been increasingly held to be too weak. He has not disciplined his own house, so that the faithful no longer know which theologians, doctrines and practices are right or wrong.

Paul has been too kind, too easy, especially on free-thinking intellectuals, ever to exercise the necessary kind of public authority that would serve to keep the basic content of the faith clear and authentic.

My own feeling about Paul VI is rather that he is the most intelligent pope in modern times in terms of analytic penetration and awareness of precisely the intelligence aspect of the faith. Coming as he did immediately during and after John XXIII and more especially after the Myth of John, Paul has tried to exercise papal authority in primarily an intellectual way. No one who reads carefully the vast and remarkable work he has produced—and all say he does most of his own writing —can doubt that here we have one of the most underestimated men of our time. We really do not expect to have such an "intellectual" as pope. On almost any theological or cultural issue on which he is criticized, Paul reveals much more insight than his critics. Many will doubt if we should have such an intelligent pope precisely because the intellectual tends to rely too much upon persuasion and the appeal of truth by its own force. The number of times Paul returns to this notion that truth should be believed for its own sake is remarkable. This is the key, I think, to why he does not

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"exercise" authority. In this he is more Thomist and rational than Augustinian. He is reluctant to believe that men, especially Christians, more especially academics, clerics and religious, will not be convinced by clear argument. I cannot help but admiring such a quality, and I am not at all sure Paul is not correct. I suspect, as the years pass, we will come to wonder how we had such a perceptive pope and why it was that a good part of the Catholic world wasted its energies disagreeing with him, when history is proving him basically right.

The Sane and Sensible

But Rome, even religious Rome, is more than the papacy. This city is full of men and women who do seek to do God's will. The condition of man's spirit is part of this city. Reporting on Rome by the secular media often tends to reduce what goes on here to questions of pure power, ambition and personality. And there are these questions. In another sense, however, there is something truly mysterious about the humanity of the Church, something that seems to touch this city in a special way. There is a dogged instinct about the sane and sensible in our lot as well as about our openness to God. Rome will look wrong or distorted to anyone who deviates in the slightest from the wholeness of Christian truth and practice. And our relation to truth is undoubtedly more than intellectual. Indeed, if Christianity means anything at all, it means that our relation to goodness and truth is something of a gift. *The Epistle to the Romans* of Paul of Tarsus remains at the very roots of our civilization. "In these is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God has put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith." (3:14-15)

Thus, to leave Rome is to leave a place that has seen the world grow and go by. Rome gives us one of the great freedoms known to man, the freedom to escape the pressure of the present, to rediscover the past of almost any period of man, the joy of knowing a real privacy, without which, as Hannah Arendt once remarked, there is no public. There are things that are truly our own business—ways and friendships and prayers and ideas we do not have to share with the world. Anyone who has spent a leisurely *pranzo* in an Italian ristorante or a quiet *coena* in the evening will appreciate not only the freshness and goodness of Italian pasta, fruits, vegetables and wines, but also the sense of friendly atmosphere that makes the Roman trattoria one of the world's great cultural events—and this mostly because it is private, even when there is conversation, laughter and a sense of belonging.

During my last days in Rome, I was fortunate enough to have a surprise visitor. Showing Rome to someone who has never been here is itself one of the pleasures of being here. We went up the Michaelangelo Steps to the Campidoglio to see Marcus Aurelius on Horseback, then into the Museum to see the Dying Gaul, the heads of Cicero and Homer and Tiberius, the Boy with the Thorn. We went into the Ara Coeli where a German Mass was just beginning to see Pinturicchio's magnificent Death of Bernadine of Siena. We saw the Gesù, Santa Prassede, Santa Maria Maggiore, Santa Maria in Trastevere, the great Arches of Septimius Severus and Titus, St. Peter's and Santa Maria degli Angeli. We heard Traviata at the Opera and went to the Papal Audience on Wednesday. I wondered if I was seeing it all for the last time. I knew I was just beginning to comprehend even a little of it.

Later, on a clear Sunday in June after a heavy rain, I walked unsuspectingly into the Piazza Venezia for a cup of coffee. In the distance I could hear a band. Presently trotted into the piazza some two hundred mounted Carabinieri in full dress on their brown and white matching horses. Then gradually into the Venezia marched some 3800 troops from the various units of the Italian military, myriads of colored uniforms and steps. Finally the tall Quirinale Guard lined the steps leading up to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The commander called the massed troops to order: "Brigate, Presenta Armi in Honore del Capo dello Stato." The massed bands played the stirring Italian National Anthem, while Giovanni Leone, the President of the Republic, climbed to place a wreath on the Tomb. The scene was glorious, except that during the whole ceremony, the loudspeaker system broadcast so much heavy static that not much could be heard, not even the bands. As I leave Rome, it is such a scene that will most probably remain with me, this almost perfectly beautiful scene marred, as in St. Peter's at the Easter Vigil, by some foible to remind me that I am still *in via*.

And so we have even here no lasting city, as the Scriptures tell us. Even Rome must be added to this truth. And yet, Rome will last. Luther was wrong. It would not have been better not to have seen Rome. I do not intend to throw a coin in the Trevi Fountain, and yet, I hope I will come back. On leaving Rome, I know I shall be gone from an infinite city, the Eternal One symbolic of our lot and our condition. I somehow do not doubt that the political and intellectual fate of what happens here during the remaining years of this century will largely determine the next century. For the ability of Catholicism to remain itself is the drama of Rome and, as I suspect, of the world itself.

Meanwhile, the sentiments about the hearts left in San Francisco and the good-byes spoken in Rome are mostly true. Happiness and beauty are ever much harder to bear than sadness and pain—of such is the mystery that these cities teach us.

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REPORTER AT THE VATICAN

DESMOND O'GRADY

A nostalgic review of fifteen years

Journalists covering the Second Vatican Council were amused by a praying mantis-like figure who sat in the Vatican press office. A gray plastic overcoat swathed him from chin to boots, his bald, immobile head contributed to the insect impression. Only his eyes moved, following the journalists. When they least expected it, he would dart forward to hand them crushing denunciations, in green and red ink, of Paul VI whom he eventually excommunicated.

Journalists saw him as a bizarre, pathetic relic of a past when anti-popes and anathemas were recurrent. No one foresaw that, 15 years later, Vatican correspondents would have little to follow but the philippics of another anti-pope, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, as he anathematized Paul VI, the Council and all its works.

The Council period was so rich that a survey of the past 15 years could become a nostalgic binge about characters such as "Beata Astronauta" who earned her nickname by asking members of the U.S. bishops' daily conciliar press panel if the astronauts orbiting the earth would see Our Lady. "Beata Astronauta" claimed to represent American housewives and asked if she could have a charisma in the kitchen. Remember charisms?

The conciliar excitement was real but the bishops, their advisers and the journalists took it with them each time they left Rome. It was the excitement of a collective, four-year reeducation session; of hundreds of journalists collaborating to a degree in unearthing stories; of a cultural revolution which made the hidebound church suddenly seem inspired.

There was an air of unreality or hyperreality to it. Via della Conciliazione leading to St. Peter's seemed a Byzantine boulevard boiling with theological chitchat but it was a world away from Main Street, Maine. And the victorious progressives did not seem to have clear ideas about curialists.

A pointer was provided by the press conference on establishment of the Synod. It was given by Cardinal Paolo Marella, at that time head of the Secretariat for Relations with non-Christian religions.

Journalists who had described the Curia as the source of the church's troubles apparently expected a closed, haughty, unlikable character. Instead Marella, fluent in French and English as well as Italian, was smiling, cordial. After the press conference, surround by a group of journalists, he spoke with *Time* correspondent Israel Shenker. "If there were more like him," said Desmond Fisher, who was then editor of the London *Catholic Herald,* as Marella walked away, "there'd be no criticism of the Roman curia." Other journalists had been converted also.

But Marella is the archetypal curialist. The journalists had been swept off their feet by the fact that he talked with them familiarly, prodding their arms and resettling his biretta, alert and witty. They should have paid attention not to Marella's manner but to his mentality. Asked if the curia would accept the Synod as an aid to *aggiornamento,* he replied, "What is *aggiornamento?"* and did not stay for an answer. Such words, he continued, are beautiful but they are pulled this way and that (squeezing in and out with his palms) like an accordion. In other words, in his opinion, the Council was all talk.

This was the Vatican which remained when the bishops and journalists departed, convinced that issues had been settled by the conciliar discussions. A Vatican which is a monarchy with a court of celibates. Consequently it is both a gossip shop and mysterious in its operations, intimate and distant. It is rather as if St. Petersburg had survived the October Revolution.

As everything depends on No. 1, a constant eye is kept on his health, his alleged comments are heeded more than his public statements, constant efforts are made to get his ear ("have a word with his confessor" is one suggestion). He is near yet far. One of his entourage, walking in St. Peter's Square beneath the Pope's lighted study window after a dinner at which too much wine flowed, asserted, "He changes his socks every day —why do you laugh? I know lots of priests who change them only once a week." Near yet far: a query to the Vatican press office as to what the Pope reads brings the answer, "Books of high culture." And does he watch television or films? "Rarely." Purportedly he only glimpsed Zeffirelli's TeleJesus for which he provided the original idea.

The cardinals' hobbies are a study in themselves. Electric trains crisscrossed the apartment of the late Cardinal Ildebrando Antoniutti. Another, from his apart-

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ment above via della Conciliazione, studies pedestrians with binoculars. A third, who died recently, posed in papal robes he never, fortunately, won the right to wear.

Some curialists are deeply involved in part-time pastoral work, some go quietly mad out of isolation: one danger signal is when they start asking theological teasers.

The Vatican is not Lhasa. Women wander in and out of Vatican city with trolleys of food bought at its stores; employees organize a soccer competition; it has its own bank. Nor is it the Kremlin. The trials of Ivan Illich and the Benedictine psychologist Gregory Lemercier were wide open to criticism but during his trial Illich was dining well in Rome with former classmates and sending photos from the dinner party to his interrogators while Lemercier was lodged in one of the city's more comfortable hotels at the Vatican's expense.

A family atmosphere. And as in most families, there is room for maneuver as long as the rules of the game are observed. News filters through. In mid '68, a Vatican source mentioned that they were toying with the first words of an imminent encylical as they would become its title and affect its reception. The utility of Latin. He said it looked as if it would begin "Humanae Vitae. . ."

"Those who don't know, write; those who know, don't write." It is difficult to prove the best stories. Luck is needed as with my Indian nuns story in 1970. An English girl teaching in Florence wrote to Robert Hoyt, founding-editor of the *National Catholic Reporter*, claiming there was a racket in European religious institutions' and hospitals' importation of Indian girls.

Hoyt asked me to check out the story. Independently I was contacted by Indian nuns in Rome who complained girls were hoodwinked about prospects, poorly prepared and badly treated in Europe. The English girl dithered about collaboration, and eventually I wrote the story for *N.C.R.* although none of the Indians concerned would put her name to a statement.

It stung the Vatican. I was told that one of the Congregations concerned, that for the Eastern Churches, had issued a denial. I wandered along to pick it up and found myself ushered into the office of the Congregation's secretary, Archbishop Mario Brini.

Brini argued that there was no exploitation of novices but recognized there might be exploitation of young Indian nurses for which the church was not responsible. He was civil enough but his American secretary, a young cleric, was hostile. I stood by my guns but the weakness of my position was that the Indian nuns were not willing to be quoted nor to supply telling details for fear of reprisals.

The story attracted worldwide attention when the London *Sunday Times* picked it up, using its correspondents in Bonn and elsewhere to add details. But I still had not proved direct church involvement and remained a "slanderer."

The *Sunday Times* proposed flying me to South India but the proof was in Rome. I had a call which told me some of the Indian nuns were at the airport on their way back to Kerala. I drove there faster than Niki Lauda and the girls named names, dates and places in a story of exploitation which linked a shyster Kerala cleric with depleted religious congregations not too choosy about their recruits. Their story appeared in *N.C.R.*, the *Sunday Times* and papers around the world. The Vatican ordered an investigation which altered recruiting methods.

Another occasion, in lighter vein, when I was able to prove my point was my meeting with Bishop Francis-Xavier Hsu of Hong-Kong. It took place in Brussels and Bishop Hsu recalled an article I had written some time previously about the difficulties of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences. This was based on documents sent me by someone concerned who considered the difficulties would diminish if they had an airing.

"You seem to know a lot about what's happening in Hong Kong," said Bishop Hsu, "for someone who's never been there."

I happened to be wearing a suit which had been made for me in Hong Kong years before. As is cus-

tomary, the tailor had stitched his name inside the jacket together with mine. I simply opened the jacket to show Bishop Hsu: "Specially made for Mr. Desmond O'Grady by Ah Chuk, 3a Humphrey's Ave., Kowloon, Hong Kong."

A story which raised Vatican hackles concerned the Sicilian banker Michele Sindona who had fled Italy as a bankrupt after operations in which the Vatican had lost money. It has since emerged that Sindona, who had a name as a sterling Catholic in the Vatican, was also a senior Mason.

The *Sunday Times* asked me to collaborate on the story which I did on condition that I would write it for countries outside Great Britain. *N.C.R.*'s current editor, Arthur Jones, who had come to Rome the week after the story's appearance in the *Sunday Times*, bought American rights to it. He rang Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, president of the Vatican bank (the Institute for the Works of Religion) for comment. Marcinkus asserted the article was libelous. When Jones reaffirmed his intention to print it, Marcinkus, who never grants interviews, told him to come to his office as soon as possible. I went too.

Marcinkus told a good story: basically, that he had

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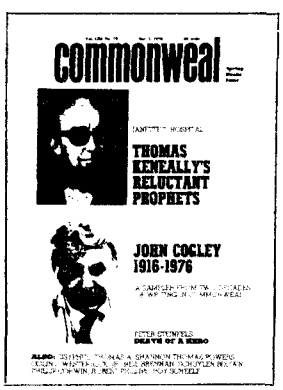

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been a friend of Sindona's but that the Vatican losses in Sindona's deals had occurred before he had his bank position. He wanted us to set the story straight and Arthur Jones reported the interview. But two days later my Sindona story appeared in the Milan weekly *Epoca.* Marcinkus, not realizing that it had been written before the interview, wrote me to express disappointment that his viewpoint was ignored.

The Sydney weekly, the *National Times,* headed the story "Pope tricked by Milan Mafia and Sindona," highlighting a minor element in my story: that largely through his personal secretary, Don Pasquale Macchi, Pope Paul had maintained links with Milanese artists and businessmen who, among other things, were responsible for refurbishing Vatican décor and building the Pope's private chapel.

Macchi wrote me to deny there was any link between Paul VI and Sindona and to assert the Pope had not brought any Milanese Mafia with him as the "Holy Father . . . gives preferential treatment to those who are opposed to him rather than to those who are friends." "I love Australia," Macchi proclaimed indignantly, "and my heart cries out to see it polluted by lies."

The rhetoric would have made Tennessee Williams blush. Meeting Williams was one of the weirder moments of the Vatican beat. He came to Rome shortly after his conversion to Catholicism and met Father Pedro Arrupe, general of the Jesuits, an office sometimes described as that of the black pope. They disconcerted each other.

"You've been favored by a great grace, Mr. Tennessee," said Arrupe to that lost-commercial-traveler face.

"I know, black Pope, I know," the visitor gasped. "Ever since, I've felt enveloped by a strange numinosity." Williams rolled back his eyes, "I feel the presence of Mary Immaculate."

There was an awkward silence until John Navone, an American Jesuit, asked "Is it a warm presence, Mr. Williams?"

Williams's index finger was raised, his voice was hushed: "There is no temperature. You Jesuits are at both ends of my salvation. I'm a descendant of the brother of St. Francis Xavier and one of your good men instructed me at Key West. I've always loved the richness of Catholic ritual, the aroma of incense, the splendor of your art, and Mary Immaculate. You bring the rosary, Wayne?" he asked over his shoulder to the young man who accompanied him.

Wayne did not have it, understandably when the visitor explained that a girl who had read of his conversion had sent him a four-foot long rosary which he kept by his bed. "You know, every day I memorize a few prayers and doctrines, just a little at a time. I keep the Hail Mary written out by my bedside table."

It sounded unlikely but I was able to confirm it when I visited Williams. I was loath to ask him about his conversion but a friend who had met him told me he was anxious to talk about it in relation to his writing. I rang Williams and he seemed very willing for me to come to his hotel at four the following afternoon.

Wayne met me when I arrived, surprised at the appointment and obviously anxious about its outcome. He was right; any other day must have been better for it. In Williams's room, the drawn blinds made it seem 4 a.m. rather than 4 p.m. Sure enough, the huge wooden rosary was draped on the bedside table, also the Hail Mary in large childish hand and a bottle of Cutty Sark. Williams lay on the bed. He did not recall making the appointment. Anyway, he said, he never gave journalists more than ten minutes.

We sparred for five minutes or so. When he told some stories about visiting Rome as a youth with a ghastly group of Southern ladies, I made an inaccurate reference to his "The Roman Summer of Mrs. Spring." Williams sneered that I had merely boned up on his writing for the interview.

"I don't think it's worth the ten minutes," I said, rising.

"What went wrong?" Williams asked Wayne offstage as the curtain began to fall. "Tell him the drugs against 'flu make me edgy."

Williams should come under a heading religion, literature and psychology or pharmacology. The psychology of power was deftly illustrated by Colonel Ghedaffi, the Libyan president, during the Catholic-Muslim discussions held in Tripoli last year. A foreigner who had studied Ghedaffi's style predicted that he would arrive unannounced during the meeting and choose to sit at the back of the hall.

Sure enough, he did so. Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, head of the Vatican delegation, left the podium and streamed down the aisle, arms outstretched, to join Ghedaffi. Ghedaffi dispatched him back to the podium, neatly upstaging him.

Eventually Ghedaffi acceded to the requests that he go to the podium: he had to be begged to assume control. The extent to which he had unbalanced everyone was revealed by the confusion between addressing him as "Brother," in the fraternal style he is supposed to prefer, or "President" and "Excellency."

He questioned the theologians who sat on the platform. Great confusion among the Vatican delegation as to who should answer. It was the year 1396 in the Muslim calendar and was a replay of medieval scenes "The king interrogates the wise men." The most disconcerting part of the performance was that Ghedaffi probed but gave no indication whether the answers met his pleasure.

When he asked if Vatican City was a Christian state, the No. 2 of the Vatican team, Monsignor Pietro Rossano, gave a lengthy answer beginning "Rome is built on seven hills and one of them is called the Vatican." Rossano showed the Vatican state insulated the Pope

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from undesirable pressures but that it was not a theocracy. The answer might have satisfied Catholic liberals but Ghedaffi commented that the Christians had failed to create a Christian state whereas Libya was a model Muslim state.

He invited all the participants to a reception in his palace built, incidentally, for Italo Balbo when he was governor of this limb of Mussolini's empire. In the queue waiting for presentation, I found myself next to Stokeley Carmichael who was there as a Guinean observer. He grew up in the Caribbean. We found we shared a passion for cricket.

When most of the guests had left, Pignedoli sat with Ghedaffi pointing out the advantages of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Ghedaffi was giving him the flashing eyes, no-response treatment which tested even Pignedoli's volubility. He began enumerating the Muslim countries which have diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The list had a surprise ending, presumably because Pignedoli sought desperately to avoid mentioning those countries, such as Algeria, on bad terms with Libya: Pakistan, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait and . . . India!

When General Franco was dying, I rang the *Washington Post*'s religion editor, Marjorie Hyer, to ask if she would be interested in Vatican expectations of post-Franco Spain. "That's not religion," was her response. "I'll switch you over to the foreign desk."

It might have been politics more than religion but it was a Vatican concern. Vatican interests are wider than religion as tightly defined, just as St. Peter's differs from most people's ideas of a church: if you want intimacy use the side chapels; St. Peter's is built for public occasions, it can accommodate applause, and debate as well as Mass.

But the Pope can appear as a diplomat who interrupts his activities every now and again to deliver a sermon. The Pope has a vicar for his diocese Rome even though he is Pope because Bishop of Rome rather than Bishop of Rome because Pope. His pastoral talks are given to audiences of thousands who have no continuing contact with him. Anyone who has read that irritating Jean Guitton book, *The Pope Speaks*, must have been worried by its Cloud-9 air.

Although it has critics from both the right and left, the Vatican's consistent *Ostpolitik* has presumably benefited the church in Eastern Europe. But the priority given to diplomatic considerations creates the impression that the Vatican would like Catholics to attend Mass regularly, pay up and shut up, allowing it to attend to the really important issues such as the international conference on sea limits.

The drift back to the faceless, preconciliar church is well underway. The ecclesiastical machine has taken over after a glimpse of a more open model of the church. It coincides with the end-of-pontificate air in the Vatican in the 15th year of Paul's reign. John's brief, exciting pontificate (4½ years) was the exception rather than the rule in this century. Benedict XV's fine pontificate (1914-22) was also, significantly, brief. Pius XII lasted 19 years, the latter of them nightmarish. Pius XI, who had last-minute thoughts about the dictators with whom he had signed concordats, 17. While St. Pius X, under whom the dirty war over Modernism broke out, survived 11 years.

Popes seem to start well with new initiatives, some fresh ideas for encyclicals but then must face growing problems with diminishing physical resources. Medicine's ability to keep people alive longer only complicates the problem.

Vatican communications strategy is to focus all attention on the Pope. I realized the extent of this when trying to extract information on those who would accompany the Pope to Asia and Australia in 1970. (It is seven years since the Pope traveled outside Italy; ten since his last encyclical.) "We don't want any attention given to the rest of the party," said an official of the pontifical Commission for Social Communications, "as it might detract interest from the Pope."

But popes are not eternal. When the next papal elections are held, journalists will write knowing profiles of the candidates but they will be based predominantly on hearsay rather than on the showing of the candidates in discussions, such as were held during the Council, or on the direct contacts common then. The Council made it possible to know churchmen as individuals with strong views, and it made theological issues matters of public concern. In other words, its method was as important as its matter. The abrupt change from the methods of the previous 400 years doubtless encouraged also a silly season. But now the momentum, the excitement has almost been completely lost. So that, after 15 years covering the Vatican, lightweight Lefebvre unexpectedly becomes the liveliest story, bringing the praying mantis in plastic raincoat to mind and suggesting that the woodwork might be a good future source.

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GOVERNMENT BY *WHAT* PEOPLE?

PETER STEINFELS

"Once he is elected president, the president's electoral coalition has, in a sense, served its purpose . . . . What counts then is his ability to mobilize support from the leaders of the key institutions in society and government . . . a broad governing coalition of strategically located supporters . . . key people in Congress, the executive branch, and the private establishment. The governing coalition need have little relation to the electoral coalition. . . .

"For twenty years after World War II presidents operated with the cooperation of a series of informal governing coalitions. Truman made a point of bringing a substantial number of nonpartisan soldiers, Republican bankers, and Wall Street lawyers into his administration. He went to the existing sources of power in the country. . . . Eisenhower in part inherited his coalition and was in part almost its creation. . . . Kennedy attempted to recreate a somewhat similar structure of alliances. Johnson was acutely aware of the need to maintain effective working relations with the Eastern establishment and other key groups in the private sector. . . ."

This cold-eyed description is found in the Trilateral Commission's widely discussed "Report on the Governability of Democracies." What the Trilateral Commission has produced is taken seriously these days. Its Director, when the Report appeared in 1975, was Zbigniew Brzezinski and its members included W. Michael Blumenthal, Harold Brown, Cyrus Vance, and half a dozen other important figures in the present administration, not to forget James E. Carter, Jr., himself.

When left-leaning scholars write this sort of thing, it is called "conspiratorial." It says, after all, that our democratic process is rather a sham. What is actually done by the president a majority elects will depend on the settlement he makes with an establishment of businessmen, Congressional barons and military leaders. Labor, too, should probably be mentioned, though the fact that it isn't only signifies what a junior partner it is in this "private government."

A year has now passed since the Carter team, newly elected, opened negotiations with the private government, and so far no agreement has been reached. It is not for want of trying on Carter's part. Supposedly he came into Washington with a strong hand, the "outsider" unencumbered by political I.O.U.s. Immediately he signaled his desire for alliance by appointing Establishment figures like Vance, "ambassadors" to the business community like Blumenthal and Lance, "responsible" liberals like Charles Schultze and "responsible" conservatives like James Schlesinger.

The private government—in this case, its dominant business segment—has refused to strike a bargain. Naturally it has not gathered in some executive suite and taken a vote on the matter, though organizations like the Business Council, the Conference Board, the Business Roundtable, and others facilitate communication among leading financiers and industrial executives, in addition to the chummier and smaller networks of influence. There is a process of signaling and a process of follow-the-leaders; and when all is said and done, the vote comes up "confidence" or "no confidence." For Carter, it has come up "no confidence," a fact blazoned through the business and financial pages and reflected in discouraging investment decisions.

The reasons for the private government's recalcitrance are several: (1) some genuinely intractable economic problems it wants the federal government to solve, but on corporate terms, i.e., the poor, the unorganized and those who have benefited from social changes since the mid-Sixties (municipal employees, for instance) should pay the price; (2) the higher expectations of deference to private power fostered by the Nixon and Ford administrations; (3) a revived sense among dynamic business leaders that they can, and they must, assert their power over national government.

The Carter response to this situation can be expressed in a single term—*appeasement*. A tax rebate is withdrawn, minimal goals for reducing unemployment are set (and not met), social legislation is delayed, Blumenthal and Schultze scurry forth to assure corporate heads that tax reform will increase their profits. With what result? Higher expectations from the business community, greater uncertainty and disappointment when the administration fails to meet them, followed by yet more administration appeasement. A little while ago the financial pages explained that the economy was being hurt by business's uncertainty whether the administration was liberal or conservative. It is an instructive development when a Democratic president is elected by labor, minorities and lower-income groups; is overwhelmingly opposed by business leadership—and still the latter appear genuinely disturbed to find him less than a hundred percent responsive to their interests.

The no-confidence stories in the business sections have now blossomed into the "ineptness" stories on the front pages—"ineptness" being a relatively neutral peg on which the congressional and labor elements in the private government can hang their complaints. Appeasement is simply not working. Had the administration

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THE SCREEN

As is no doubt apparent by now to anyone who has read this column on a regular basis, the only humanity I ever expect to find greatly revealed in a film is the filmmaker's own. To me, art is a process of private disclosure, of finding a way to make public and available feelings and ambiguities whose only other medium is life itself. And the only "'character" in a film we can hope to know in that way is the director or writer. Nevertheless, there are a great many films that do offer us just the other sort of character, the one whose fictitious or documentary story is being told by the film, and that are not to be sniffed at. This is the sort of film which gets by on the sheer force of some personality in it. The filmmaker takes a back seat here. He becomes self-effacing in ways that limit both art and cinematic technique. But the characters shine. The result is a film which is amusing rather than moving—a film which has, if not the power of art, at least charm anyway.

The recent New York Film Festival demonstrated how gratifying such films can be, too. Consider *Omar Gatalato,* an import from—of all places—Algeria. As a story, it is rather uneventful. A young man buys a second-hand tape recorder in which the previous owner has left a tape so captivating, he eventually asks her out. Nor are the values and preoccupations of Omar (Boualem Benani) very attractive ones. He is as callow as the lower-middle-class youth one meets in any capitalist country. He likes his job because it is little work and leaves him time to day-dream about rock music, clothes and being a stud. What wins us over, however, is still Omar himself—or rather, in spite of himself. Filmmaker Merzak Allouache lets Omar speak to us directly in much of the film, offering us his reflections on his life as if he were in a Godard movie. As a consequence, someone we cannot resist emerges from the disparity between Omar's monologue and his actions—between the young man who boasts with such posed casualness about being a womanizer, and the one who takes the whole film to make up his mind whether he should ask the woman on the tape for a date.

Aside from *Omar Gatalato,* though, what the films at the Festival suggest is that it is difficult to sustain an entire feature this way. It is too bad that there is no real audience for the short, for several of the most appealing films of this kind—indeed, of the whole Festival —are films whose fifteen- to sixty-minute running times doom them to a distribution limbo. All these are of course documentaries, though only one is ostensibly about the individual whose personality carries the film. That one is *Grandpa,* a film which an aspiring director named Stephen Forman did about his grandfather Ben. Since Ben also paid for the film, the whole thing might well be a cinematic version of the vanity press. But it's not. On the contrary, where the film succeeds is at those moments when Ben's reminiscences about his own father and repartee with his grandson off-camera throw the generation gap into relief.

None of the other noteworthy shorts, as I said, has its central personalities as its ostensible subject. Marjie Short's *Kudzu* is presumably about a plant that grows rampant in the State of Georgia. But it's really about Georgians. It's about the matronly, overweight woman who remembers with relish having been "Kudzu Queen" in college, and the old cracker who blandly declares, "The three things I hate most is cities, liberals and kudzu—can't see no need for none of 'em." It's about the poet James Dickey, who vehemently denounces kudzu as "vegetable cancer," and about the reporter who ironically recommends a young man go into kudzu farming.

Perhaps the most attractive of all the shorts, though, is William Miles's *Men of Bronze,* an hour documentary about the all-black 369th Regiment which fought in World War I. Certainly the most attractive spokesman any of these films contains is Frederick H. Williams, a veteran of the 369th whom Miles turns up. Miles wisely lets Williams, who can hardly be less robust and forthright now than sixty years ago, spend much of the film just telling anecdotes. Williams is a great raconteur, as when he proposes that the Battle of the Marne began when he and other over-eager black recruits returned the fire of German soldiers who were only boar hunting. By allowing Williams to dominate his film, Miles allows him to stand for the whole 369th, and so puts his subject across more vividly than he could have in any other way.

Roseland might be thought of as a documentary too, except that it was written by a woman, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, who had never heard of the famous New York ballroom until shortly before she did the script. She just made up the characters who frequent it. Nonetheless, *Roseland is* a short, or rather a series of three shorts filmed on location at Roseland and packaged together as a feature. The first and last of these episodes are, like two of the three shorts discussed above, carried by a single performance. In the first, the performance is Lou Jacobi's as a good-time Charlie who is trying to avoid advances made by Teresa Wright because dancing with him gives her visions of her dead husband. In the last, the performance is Lilia Skalla's as a tough and seedy old dowager who literally peabodies her dancing partner to death. The beginning and end of *Roseland* are, thus, very much of a piece with the other films I've been describing. In the middle episode, however, something else happens.

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Perhaps the limitation of this sort of film which lives on charm alone is that it can only represent mankind in a loving and sentimental way. None of the self-contradiction in man on which real art depends is evident in the films I'm dealing with here. The one possible exception—and a very limited one at that—is the middle episode of *Roseland*. But then this is also the episode that comes closest to being an interaction among characters, a drama, rather than just a character study. It's the story of an attempt made by Marilyn (Geraldine Chaplin) to lure Russell (Christopher Walken), a gigolo, away from the wealthy Roseland habitué who supports him. The satisfying irony of this episode is that Russell turns out in the end to represent a more complex view of human experience, and therefore perhaps a more moral one, than the good-hearted Marilyn.

Marilyn can see only that Russell is prostituting himself with the beautiful but ailing and cloying heiress, Pauline (Joan Copeland), who supports him. Marilyn wants to take Russell away from all that. But she tries to force the issue on a night when they are all gathered at Roseland for a welcome-back party for Pauline, who is recently out of the hospital. Russell decides to stay with Pauline, and it is impossible to say whether it is his own sloth and dependence that makes him do so, or a genuine decency that renders him incapable of deserting Pauline in need. Whichever is the case, this one moment in *Roseland* manages to give us a much more privileged sense of human nature than is found in any of the other films discussed here, wonderful as the smiling public selves we see in them are.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BOOKS

THE TIME THAT WAS THE SIXTIES

WILLIAM B. HIXSON, JR.

Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties
MORRIS DICKSTEIN
Basic Books, $11.95

America in Our Time
GODFREY HODGSON
Doubleday, $12.95

In the present context of disillusionment and drift, it is not surprising to see a spate of books on the 1960s, written less for purposes of fabricating nostalgia than for finding out where we are now and how we got here. On the one hand, the university presses are beginning to pour out monographs on the Indochina war, black protest, and political trends; on the other, a smaller group of authors are attempting the riskier task of "putting it all together." Two of the most rewarding of these new syntheses are Morris Dickstein's *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties* and Godfrey Hodgson's *America in Our Time.*

Dickstein addresses himself directly to cultural developments within the decade. But the reader should be forewarned that his focus is somewhat narrower than his subtitle might imply. Determined to refute McLuhan's assumption that "books have been displaced," Dickstein concentrates almost exclusively on the written word. Though he feels compelled to include a chapter on rock music, he is primarily concerned with developments in American poetry and fiction and only secondarily explores literary criticism, social theory, and journalism. Within these limits his book is a sustained and illuminating analysis of American writers and their relationship to the wider culture.

In the case of fiction, for example, Dickstein argues that the realist tradition reached a dead end in the 1950s. The general narrowing of political vision in those years was paralleled by a specific narrowing of the novelist's focus, so that reality was seen "less in terms of money, class, and social ambition than as an infinitely complex web of personal relationships and subtle shades of consciousness." In the early 1960s, in contrast, "there was a scent of change in the air, a sense of things opening up" in both politics and literature, and in the "experimental forms" of Joseph Heller, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Pynchon he finds a "creative exuberance," a "belief that old molds can be broken and recast," which would become leitmotifs for the entire culture of the decade. At the same time the "comic-apocalyptic" themes of these authors foreshadowed another side of the sixties, and in one of the most penetrating passages in the book, Dickstein contrasts them with the themes of the novels of the fifties: "For the fifties writers history is remote and irrelevant compared to 'private people and their minute concerns'; for the sixties writers history is absurd but it can kill you."

If Dickstein singles out certain aspects of American culture for close analysis, Godfrey Hodgson is determined to encompass the entire sweep of society. For many years American correspondent for the London *Times* and the *Observer,* he has few peers in mastering detail. Hodgson dispatches with ease such convoluted questions as trends in the distribution of income, the impact of the war on inflation, or the shape of public opinion in 1968. His talents, however, are not limited

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to the dissection of statistical data: his analysis of the hucksters of the counter-culture is exceptionally sharp; and he brings to his account of the breakdown of the civil-rights movement an unusual degree of sympathetic understanding.

Hodgson takes as his theme nothing less than the rise and fall of the governing consensus in the two decades after World War II. Born of war-induced prosperity and the frustrations of world power, shaped in the confrontation between the Establishment Center and the McCarthyite Right, that consensus had been formulated by about 1955. "Confident to the point of complacency about the perfectibility of American society, anxious to the point of paranoia about the threat of communism," the consensus reached its culmination in the presidential campaigns of 1960. But from the start the consensus incorporated too many illusions about the problem-solving potentials of economic expansion at home and military intervention abroad. And it consistently overlooked those social forces which would ultimately disrupt it: the migration of blacks out of the South, the explosion of the college-student population, the insecurities of a very real working class. It was Lyndon Johnson's tragedy not only to act on the flawed assumptions of the consensus but to do so at the very point at which these forces manifested themselves in ghetto riots, student protests, and "white backlash."

Much of this has been said before, though seldom at such a consistent level of excellence. What makes Hodgson's book frequently provocative (and occasionally puzzling) are the perspectives through which he sees all these developments. Half of his book, for example, covers the years 1963 through 1969; yet in another sense—in the sense in which Dickstein discusses the culture of the decade—"the sixties" do not appear at all. Hodgson's "consensus" continues uninterrupted until about 1965; then come three years of turbulence; then the Nixon era begins. Dickstein's "sense of things opening up" in the early sixties is largely missing from Hodgson's book; in fact he goes out of his way to make Kennedy's administration indistinguishable from Eisenhower's.

Throughout his book Hodgson insists on describing the consensus established in the mid-fifties as a "liberal" consensus, reminding the reader only at the very end of his account that it included conservatives as well as liberals, businessmen as well as intellectuals. But by arguing that the 1968 election saw a rejection of "liberalism," he also implies that it marked the collapse of the governing consensus and its illusions. That, however, is very doubtful. Did any administration ever show more "paranoia about the threat of communism" than Richard Nixon's, a paranoia no less intense because it focused on students in California and on workers in Chile more than on bureaucrats in the Kremlin? And (at least since the Coolidge years) has any group in power been more complacent about the American economic system than the ideologues who surrounded Gerald Ford?

Hodgson argues again and again that the deeply flawed consensus arose in the first place because there was no American Left to criticize it. But while he insists that such a Left is essential not only for political sanity but for social progress, he gives no indication that a credible American Left is even possible. He points out that neither Nader nor the ecology movement nor women's liberation have transcended their middle-class base, yet his conclusions about the American working class serving as a basis for the Left are pessimistic. Hodgson emphasizes its racial fragmentation, its self-conscious "Americanism," and its pursuit of an "equality of opportunity" that he deems unreal—all of which have produced working-class support for candidates of the Right. Now all of this analysis is debatable, but the point is that *by his own terms* he seems to foreclose the possibility of the very movement he believes essential for a more rational and a more humane political system. As a result, the optimism Hodgson expresses in the opening and closing chapters—in which he seems to say, "It is not as bad as you think, Americans"—appears misplaced. Read carefully, his book gives a very different impression: "it is in fact much worse."

Circles

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Doubleday, $7.95

BARBARA MUTKOSKI

Circles is an absorbing first novel, and it is cleverly written. Unlike the roman à clef which portrays real people under fictional names, Abigail McCarthy gives us an interesting variation: "Real people walk through the story under their own names, but, with one exception, they carry on fictional conversations with fictional characters in a way that I think is faithful to the manner of their own casual conversations." The story was suggested to Mrs. McCarthy by an incident in the presidential year of 1972, and she deftly places it in a "hypothetical 1976," with the actual candidates of that year. She tells us that the event did not take the course suggested in her novel, "but very well could have."

The plot line is simple: the rise and fall of a presidential candidate, Senator Sam Nordahl, and the influence of the media upon his career. The concerns of the book are complex, however, and the question of women's identity is central. Since the novel is subtitled "a Washington story," the focus is on the identity of married and single women involved, however peripherally, in the game of politics. Mrs. McCarthy uses the technique of multiple point of view and, thus, we are privy to the thoughts of five major characters at different times throughout the novel. The narrative begins and ends with Laura Talbert and her sections form a frame, or a circle, about the plot line concerning Senator Nordahl and his wife.

Laura Talbert, a widow in her sixties, has been both participant and spectator in Washington's social circles

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through several administrations. She muses at the beginning of the novel that certain attitudes are necessary for Washington survival. "One must be caught up in the game we all play here, placing little bets of pieces of our lives on who will win, who will lose, who will stay, who will go, who matters." In defense of this attitude, and hoping that the reader will not think her cynical, she writes: "It is the game played everywhere and I am glad to have played it in the greatest arena of all where the survival of humanity is at stake rather than, let us say, the competition of business interests. Think what Pittsburgh must be like!" Indeed.

Several women figure in the novel, but the central voice of the narrative is that of a young television commentator, Jeff Streator. Jeff's reputation has grown because his his perceptive interviews and his effective speaking voice. "It's the voice of the universal observer," states one critic, "the Greek chorus of our time." It is because of Jeff Streator's documentary on possible presidential candidates than Sam Nordahl is catapulted into the national limelight. And it is from Jeff's point of view that we first observe Mrs. Nordahl.

Alice Ann Nordahl represents to the public the typical political wife. The staff is patronizing toward her, calling her "Lady Alice," and the media see her as simply a necessary appendage to her husband's career. Jeff makes light of the women's rituals and gatherings until his coverage of the Senate Ladies Luncheon. Surprising revelations about the political wife's métier emerge. In *Private Faces, Public Places*, Abigail McCarthy's autobiography, she ponders the identity of a politician's wife: "The poitical side of her life is a career in relations; her job is to interpret, reflect, and round out the image of the public man. Besides, that, she is often confidential adviser, behind-the-scenes organizer, and sometimes speech writer." Jeff Streator follows Alice Ann Nordahl along the campaign trail, watching her develop as an adept and persuasive speaker. Ironically, Mrs. Nordahl emerges as the confident public figure when her husband's career begins to crumble. She makes her own statement to reporters, and it is she who saves Nordahl from psychological ruin, supporting him when his staff scatters.

Not all the women in *Circles* are able to find their identities in conjunction with their husbands'. Sarah Streator is not content with the role of homemaker, and opts to return to her work in journalism. "One has to have one's own identity. One is what one does," she reflects. In Mrs. McCarthy's own memoir the problem surfaces: "If his [Eugene McCarthy's] vocation was to politics, and marriage was not a vocation, what was my vocation? The whole question of woman was then latent in our lives." The question is sensitively treated in *Circles* and reflected on by women of various ages.

The last chapter is a chorus of voices, deftly orchestrated. The circular form of the novel returns us to Laura Talbert and to the farewell party being given in her honor as she takes leave of Washington. The chapter is written as a series of interior monologues, each delivered by the leading women of the novel. Each woman questions her own life and the lives of the women about her. As Sarah Streator climbs the spiral stairs to the luncheon she wonders about her identity. Introduced as an accomplished reporter, she questions what her legacy will be when she is Laura's age. "Some tapes of news programs? I will be a shadow among shadows in the station's vaults. But I will have earned my way. Perhaps more—perhaps someday I will affect events." And Alice Ann Nordahl, who looks at Sarah, knowing that she could not find an answer for herself in Sarah's choices. "It seems to me that she has given her life to the shadows of reality." Sarah shakes her head as she looks at the political ladies. "It is not enough. It is a half life, even if beautifully lived. It isn't enough for us anymore."

Of Laura's contemporaries, there is Tiana Briggs, a White House correspondent and a veteran of five administrations, who has earned her way into Washington society by hard work and tough armor. Tiana questions the world that Laura represents. "It is a world they have made for themselves," a world of unspoken agreements as to morality and behavior. Yet the elegance and ritual of that world is clearly fading, as Mrs. Talbert makes her Chekovian exit. Catherine Elliott, her contemporary toasts her with warm thanks, and thinks "God, I hope I mean it. I hope there has been some sense to Laura's life and mine. I hope I am not just imposing order on chaos with words."

One has a sense of a passing away of another generation of women, the conservators of the rituals and ceremonies, those symbols of the "fine, delicate web of associations and friendships and unspoken understandings which hold humanity together." Already Tiana's editor has not considered the luncheon important enough to be covered. Laura muses that perhaps as women change, as they move from the periphery, they will evolve other ways. In the counterpoint of voices, serious questions are raised. Yet the grace with which Laura Talbert takes leave of her Washington life, and the "art" she has made of it are clearly sympathetic. "One lives in one's time and place as well and truthfully as possible. Then it is time to go."

Rocky Marciano

EVERETT M. SKEHAN

Houghton Mifflin; $10.95

WALTER ARNOLD

Amazing that this is the first biography of the great heavyweight champion of the fifties, who died in 1969. Perhaps the surviving family and friends, whose close cooperation Skehan had, did not want to talk before. Or maybe they were waiting for a writer like Skehan, a reporter for the Worcester *Evening Gazette* who came from Brockton, Massachusetts, where Rocky was born and grew up. Whatever, we have here a further and very interesting contribution to the increas-

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ingly voluble recovery of that decade full of secrets.

Sports biographies are for the fans, usually. And the fight descriptions that climax this narrative are everything a fan could hope for: fresh, detailed, dramatic, harrowing. They are alive. The fearsome or classic bouts with Carmine Vingo, Roland LaStarza, Joe Louis, Jersey Joe Walcott, Ezzard Charles, and Archie Moore are recounted as if they were happening for the first time. (Unfortunately, Skehan's pen has a tendency to run purple when he is *not* describing a fight or quoting someone, which he does extensively and effectively.) But the book is much more interesting and surprising as an unfinished portrait of a strange, affecting, sometimes hilarious, contradictory human being, very much a figure of the fifties.

"Today mostly paper tigers," Rocky wrote on a sheet of motel stationary in Altoona, Pennsylvania, where he was making notes for a talk on boxing. "Game run by men of greed little interest in long range plans for the good of all classic image of the gallant gladiators in battle giving their all I've become a computer (no human element) nature of man to be better never quit toy people in a make believe world." Something more than boxing was on his mind.

Brockton, midway between Boston and Cape Cod, was a multi-ethnic and often humming shoe-manufacturing city in Rocky's day. His father, Pierino Marchegiano, was a frail man who had been gassed at Chateau-Thierry and worked most of his life in a factory. (His mother, Pasqualena, was a tremendously strong woman who hated boxing and spent most of the time during Rocky's matches praying for him in St. Patrick's Church.) A good part of Rocky's motivation was to use any talent he had to avoid working in the shoe shops like his father "for cheap money."" Ironically, his eventual triumph and last years fairly coincided with Brockton's last years as a flourishing independent industrial city, and Skehan might have made more of this. fact.

Rocky's first sport and first love was baseball, which he quit high school to play. He was a naturally powerful hitter, but the very muscles that made him so also made him a poor runner and thrower. And he had a bad back all his life. So when he was invited to try out for the Chicago Cubs' farm team, he failed to make it. In the meantime everybody in the neighborhood (the heavily Italian Ward Two, where I myself grew up twelve years later) knew that Rocky had a wicked right when he was provoked. (He did not pick fights, ever, but only ended them, very fast.) He had begun to use this to good effect boxing for the Army at Fort Lewis, Washington, after service in the War. When he told his old Brockton neighbor and local sports organizer Allie Colombo about this, Allie was the first of his friends to have visions of the heavyweight championship for Rocky and became his trainer (along with, later, little Al Goldman) and constant companion for the rest of his career. (I saw them often, before school in the morning, out my living-room window, jogging and shadow-boxing up the street.) But the first fight Allie got for Rocky, in the Ancient Order of Hibernians Hall in Brockton, ended inauspiciously: Rocky fouled out.

Marciano was never a pretty boxer. He was, especially in the beginning, an embarrassingly clumsy mauler and slugger, who could apparently take any amount of pounding punishment. In the scarcely metaphorical parlance of the fight game, he had tremendous heart. But he had something else, the boxing equivalent of a tactical nuclear weapon, that absolutely natural and devasting looping overhand right he called his Suzy Q. The contest was usually over when Rocky got tired of drawing out his opponent, or of being hurt, and found the opening for his remorseless parabolic arm. He finally found it it the 13th round (after being knocked down for the first time in his career in the first) of the title bout with Jersey Joe Walcott in 1952 and became the first white heavyweight champion since James J. Braddock was knocked out by Joe Louis in 1937. (Rocky had, of course, KO'd Louis the previous year—and immediately wrote him out a note of regret and homage.) In the return bout he easily knocked out Jersey Joe in the first round.

Rocky's professional record is astonishing: he never lost a fight, and won 43 out of his 49 by knockouts, most of these within five rounds. No heavyweight before or since has equaled this; Louis holds the next best knockout record. Barney Ross said Marciano was the hardest hitter and gamest heavyweight he'd seen since Dempsey. He made this record not only by his "heart" and his right but also, as Skehan shows, by almost fanatical and extremely ascetic training to the ends of his fingers. (He was locally known as the hermit of Grossinger's, where he often trained for his bouts.)

But there was another, and darker, element, which was that if Rocky ever felt insulted, or injured even without

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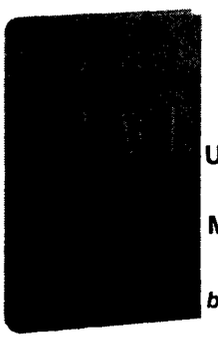

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insult, he fought savagely and mercilessly. His own brother had to scream who he was at Rocky once when they were sparring and Sonny hit him a little too hard; a lifelong friend and sometime sparring-partner ran terrified from the ring once, seeing Rocky's face contorted by momentary rage. He was at least two different people, inside and outside the ring.

At the peak of his career, in 1956, after knocking out the contending Archie Moore some months before, Rocky abruptly and shrewdly retired. Although he always had great respect and affection, and pity and often help, for former boxers, a reporter once said that there never was a champion who had less respect for or interest in the fight business. As for syndicate crime figures, even though he was fascinated by their way of living and became genuinely friendly with some of them, he deplored their influence on big sports and would have nothing to do with that. (A dying Vito Genovese told Rocky, "Some of us have done bad things in our lives, but you have us proud.") He abominated the then boxing commissioner, James Norris, who was later charged with criminal involvement and removed, and his own manager, Al Weill, who was almost certainly cheating Rocky out of some of his gate money. He wanted to retire undefeated and keep the millions he made and would make in public appearances. He kept it so well in fact—he hid quantities of cash compulsively in ceiling fixtures, bathroom plumbing, holes in the ground—that to this day his family has not found half of it.

Obviously Rocky Marciano was not Rocky Balboa, despite not coincidental resemblances. Neither was he Joe Bonaparte of Clifford Odets's *Golden Boy*, although Joe's metaphor for himself of "a bullet when it sings through the air has not past, only a future" is all too fitting. After Rocky hit his target, the rest of his life was more like the career of a pinball in a machine with no tilts. Restless, aimless, often caught in comical circumstances (he insisted on being shot rather than knocked out in a pilot TV adventure program), bounding around for far-fetched and abortive business deals, Rocky was a Stranger, with friends everywhere. "Insecure," capitalized and underlined, flashes like an existential neon sign throughout his notebook. He hardly ever saw his old family and friends or his wife and daughter anymore. (His beloved Allie Colombo had gone to work in a supermarket supply house and was accidentally crushed to death by a truck a few months before Rocky died.) But despite his stinginess with actual money (another child of the Depression terrified of going broke), he still would go anywhere anytime to help friends or friends of friends in need. He was on such an errand in August of 1969 when the small private plane he was in crashed in a fog into a lone tree in a Nebraska cornfield, killing everyone aboard. Rocky was forty-six.

"He was a strange one," Skehan quotes a friend of Rocky's, "Nobody ever knew Rocky except Rocky, and that was exactly the way he wanted it." As to the first observation, this biography leaves no doubt. As to the second, I am not so sure. I never really knew him, but I remember him and his family very well. He once carried my injured sister, who was a friend of his sisters, all the way home from the tennis courts next to his favorite ballfield in Brockton. He is in fact remembered by her and everyone who knew him I have ever talked with as a sweet and gentle man, above all a modest man, a sort that now seems almost almost extinct. Mr. Skehan writes absolutely truly: "Rocky had that personal touch that made average people feel comfortable and welcomed. And almost everyone who met him went away with an increased sense of pride and self-importance." A funny thing to come from a man who certainly didn't always have the sense himself and who, as my father said, if he hit you once he'd kill you. In this troubling and surprising account he begins to seem a metaphor for the fifties themselves.

Coal

AUDRE LORDE

Norton, $7.95

Gathering The Tribes

CAROLYN FORCHE

Yale, $1.95

CLAIRE HAHN

Contemporary poetry has been influenced, inevitably, by Freud, Jung, and the psychoanalytic schools deriving from them. The most sensitive of the new poets reflect this influence through a serious attempt to put themselves in touch with the full range of their experience. They write what critics like A. Alvarez call "depth" poetry, a poetry of psychological integrity. When this honest effort to deal imaginatively with the complex response of their inner world to exterior phenomenon is fused with intelligence and technical control. poets create exciting works in a distinctively modern voice.

Audre Lorde and Carolyn Forche are both gifted poets endowed with clarity of inward vision and a willingness and power to project it with often devastating impact. Lorde's poems are concerned most often with the mystery and variety of love relationships. She writes a sequence of movingly beautiful elegies for a dead girl and a long narrative portrait of the unique Martha who, fighting off death in a hospital bed, evolves through her pain into another Martha. Lorde broods on her impotence to forestall either the blessing or curse she leaves her child:

> Of the way she will taste her autumns—
> toast-brittle or warmer than sleep—
> and the words she will use for winter
> I stand already condemned.

Her poems are often angry and bitter, etched in vitriol on the stark page. In "Story Books on a Kitchen Table," one of her strongest and most perfectly articulated poems, Lorde deals

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with the anguish at the center of her being—she is a black woman in a white culture. The rainbow colors of the fairy tale books that other children read can be but a nightmare of garish colors for her. For this child, only two colors really count and in the stories she reads "white witches ruled." They offer no gold on enchantment "for the vanished mother/ of a black girl."

But the total impact of the poems is positive. Audre Lorde is secure in the knowledge of her worth as person and poet. Lines from the title poem, "Coal," might stand as an epigraph for the entire volume.

I am Black because I come from
the earth's inside
now take my word for jewel in
the open light.

Public pressures on her private world have made Lorde a poet of diamond-hard intensity.

Like Lorde, Carolyn Forche writes poetry of pellucid honesty. She too explores the paradoxical freedom and constraint bestowed on her through the blood of her forbears. Her Slavic ancestors bequeathed her rituals of religion and husbandry, customs that were "sacred and eternal." But she presses always to know more, to understand the mystery behind the ritual. In "Burning the Tomato Worms," the little girl in the poem is being initiated by her old grandmother into the rites of Slovakian womanhood. But the child aches to ask:

Why I am here and will have to
feel the way I die
It was all over my face
Grandma flipped kalacy rolls
Dunked her hands in bowls of
water
Looked at me
Wrung the rags into the stoop
Kept it from me
Whatever she saw.

The deepest harmonies Forche discovers are with nature itself. The landscapes and people, not only of the Michigan farm of her childhood, but of New Mexico, British Columbia, and coastal Washington, provide images for her poetry. She writes with a profound sense of the beauty and threat in the rhythms of the seasons and her own bodily needs. Some of her most impressive poetry deals with sexual experience. Perhaps because Forche writes with such deceptive ease, these poems achieve an unadorned eloquence, a seeming inevitability of statement. But Forche is no romanticist; at the most intimate moment a lover can be the enemy.

You recognize strangers,
think you lived through destruction.
You can't explain this night, my
face, your memory.
You want to know what I know?
Your own hands are lying.

The balanced insight she attains is hard-won, precarious. Her quiet insistence on looking simultaneously at the beautiful and the ugly makes her poetry complex; her technical skill makes it a disciplined art.

This is Carolyn Forche's first volume of poetry. The fact that it has been published by the prestigious Yale Series of Younger Poets means that public acknowledgement of her gifts has come early. Audre Lorde has published three previous books. Both women write with authority and intensity. They are artists who, without being "confessional" poets, are not afraid to come to terms with their full experience of life. The voice of American poetry is excitingly alive in their writing.

A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada

ROBERT T. HANDY

Oxford University Press, $19.95

HENRY WARNER BOWDEN

Probably one of the first questions one has to ask when picking up a book like this is: why another general history of American churches? At least four good texts have appeared in the last ten years, covering much the same ground, so how can another be justified? The publisher's answer is that this is an early contribution to a proposed twenty volume series, edited by British scholars Henry and Owen Chadwick, eventually comprising a many-faceted view of Christian churches "and their part in the religious heritage of humanity." The author's answer, I surmise, is that it represents his mature reflections and insights acquired over decades of research. The finished product does not differ radically from other surveys of the topic, but it does convey in succinct, readable prose the general overview and careful judgments made by one of this country's most distinguished church historians.

An additional defense of the book's appearance is that it attempts to combine a study of ecclesiastical experience in both the United States and Canada within a single narrative. Such an orientation makes a great deal of sense because many of the same denominations have flourished in the two countries, including those imported from Europe as well as those originating in the New World. This larger focus helps readers understand the broader ramifications of British colonial policy, the continued story of 30,000 Loyalists who preferred northern emigration to republican government, and over the next 150 years comparable trends in revivalism, ethnic tensions and social reform together with recent developments in ecumenical experimentation.

Neither story is a carbon copy of the other, and Handy makes skillful comparisons along the way to highlight the distinctive aspects of American and Canadian religious events in their respective settings. He devotes three chapters—the first two and the last—to combined analysis, about 30 percent of the total pagination. He gives the lion's share, about 50 percent, to American events while the remainder, three chapters or 20 percent, concentrates on problems and achievements north of the border. This kind of inclusive effort is certainly praiseworthy, but in my view the discussion of churches in the two areas is more

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juxtaposed than fully meshed, even in the common chapters where subheadings keep topics apart. This is largely due to the fact that the two countries and their churches really are different, and their histories require cognizance of different environmental and social conditions which shaped their ends, often disparate in nature. The resulting study affords us a pair of compact surveys, with little integration of the two, but it is still good to read them side by side.

Another aspect worth noting is that this publication helps keep readers up to date with current scholarship. Almost twenty years ago the author collaborated with H.S. Smith and L.A. Loetscher to produce *American Christianity: An Historical Interpretation with Representative Documents*, 2 vols. (New York, 1960-63), a masterly study which has stood the test of time and the scrutiny of a thousand critical students. But more to the point, Handy has not remained in the same mind-set since then. Most of his notes and references in the present work are to volumes produced since 1960, thus combining the best of recent specialized monographs with his general chronological framework outlined previously. His twenty-one page bibliographical essay is a sure guide to standard sources as well as to pertinent material for investigating topics at greater length. It is a masterful synthesis of the latest information. It does not stress controversial hypotheses, nor does it bring to light any new discoveries. While it does not err on the side of being too dry and encyclopedic, neither does it give undue space to pet themes or try to reduce the panoply of New World religion to a few holistic interpretations.

> *The Roman Catholic Church was deeply affected by the reversals of the later sixties—the high hopes stimulated by Vatican II soon faded. Many who had been quite willing to reform the church were hardly prepared for the decline of authority and the radical suggestions and actions that emerged; . . . in the swift tempo of change, yesterday's novelty often became today's bore. . . . some became skeptical of the church and drifted away, others were disillusioned as old securities and disciplines were eroded, while still others were disappointed because the changes were not sweeping enough.*
>
> —A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada

The main focus of this learned exposition is on religion and society, not on the internal growth of churches as ends in themselves. Institutional developments loom large in such a study as separate churches flourished and interdenominational cooperation increased to affect wider circles of life in both colonial and national contexts. Personal experiences are relevant insofar as they gave rise to new motivating factors; distinctive lines of thought are judged important when they contributed to the larger spectrum of religious forces; those trends are valued when they worked powerfully on a national scale. These larger movements are almost always the leading items, and theology or doctrinal conflicts are not considered in their own right as much as they are mentioned occasionally to explain the direction of institutional change.

Within this set of priorities, Handy concentrates most often on the history of mainstream evangelical churches: Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist. His choice makes it possible (and doubtless was selected because of that facility) to include the majority of church members in both countries being studied. Closely following those, but by no means opposed to them for comparative purposes, he gives almost equal space to Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and Reformed churches. All these denominations receive fair treatment, as do all ethnic and confessional divisions of the above-mentioned units plus separate groupings among Negroes, Indians and European sectarians.

This work is highly recommended, but readers should recognize that it does not explicate as much as summarize the central features of religious history on the continent. It can serve equally well as an introduction to the many forms which religion has taken in America and Canada, or it can be a trusty reminder for advanced students who are looking for essential points and an index to further reading.

It will serve many purposes, whether as a reference tool or read from cover to cover as a basic text. It presents in sober judgment, candid assessment and realistic outlook much of what the past tells us about our modern world. The future of Protestant-Catholic cooperation, English-French identities, black-white-red relations, even concerns for liturgical change, ecclesiastical reform, missionary outreach, civil justice and private virtue —all these must be understood in light of what has preceded their current status. Handy's latest book provides solid foundations for that understanding.

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IN BRIEF

A BOOK OF PARABLES, *by Daniel Berrigan, Seabury*, $7.95.

It is not true that Daniel Berrigan cannot write a bad sentence; only that I will read any that he commits to paper with what I take to be profit and know to be pleasure. The sixteen meditations here gathered by Seabury (Orbis, bravest of the publishing Catholics, declined) are among his most pleasurable offerings to date.

I guess they're not parables except in Auden's sense of parable-art. Others have called them brilliant iconoclastic meditations for moderns, poetic musings and moral essays, even monodramas. Berrigan says they were written to "lighten the mood" in a dreary Detroit Lententide. Since Lent comes more than once a year and Detroit is where you find it, I find it pays to come back to them time and again.

Like the biblical tales themselves

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on which these reflections are based, each yields a variety of interpretations and not all yield easily. Some, like "The Patience of Job in Detroit, Michigan," "The Whale's Tale" and especially "Eve and the Bible Salesman" (the book's original working title) are marvelous short stories that would have had Flannery O'Connor slapping her peacocks with delight. But the glosses on Elijah, Elisha, Daniel and David invite the reader to pause—often—and ponder. Cain's letters from the joint are troubling. The ghetto kid in for murder one becomes at one point the son of a crusty old Irishman; the mystical union of all felons?

The book is, like the Book of Job, like Berrigan, "angry and scandalous;" it's also, like him, full of irony and wit. And equally clearly full of hope.

THOMAS E. QUIGLEY

ESSAYS OF E.B. WHITE, *by E.B. White, Harper & Row, $12.50.*

E.B. White is a very special writer: a stylist with the informality of a general-store keeper; an observer with the wit and candor of the sage by the pot-bellied stove; a sophisticate with the polish of the slicker who just dropped in from the big city.

Since the 1930s, E.B. White has been sending the world pleasant, deceptively profound essays from middle Maine, and these have delighted, moved, influenced a couple generations of readers of the *Atlantic, Harper's, Holiday* and most especially *The New Yorker.* Here are 31 of those essays, 22 of them from *The New Yorker,* White's literary home.

Like most books of collected essays, this one tends to be a jumble, and White himself doesn't help in the sorting out when he datelines some essays and not others, and when he provides the book with no perfectly chronological sections. As he concedes in his foreword, a mild confusion may result. "Sometimes the reader will find me in the city when he thinks I am in the country, and the other way around." Never mind. The talented essayist can be read for the sheer beauty of the sentences, and there are few essayists around with the talent of E.B. White. Dwight Macdonald, Wilfrid Sheed, maybe one or two more.

As for these essays, some will be familiar. "Here Is New York," for instance, moved from *Holiday* to the Book-of-the-Month Club, a 1949 selection; there's hardly a suburban garage sale where you don't run into a copy. Some essays are dated—again "Here Is New York," which was written when the subway cost a dime (up, alas, from a nickel) and when the city could be cited for its solidarity and continuity. (White worries in the foreword, written last April, that New York now suffers from an undetected brain tumor.) Finally, some of the essays are from less popular journals and are just now finding their way between hard covers. They will be quite new to most readers and thoroughly enjoyable to all.

But familiar or not, old or older, the essays of the master can be read and reread. It's the secret of the trade, and the trademark of E.B. White. Ask the guy behind the counter. JOHN DEEDY

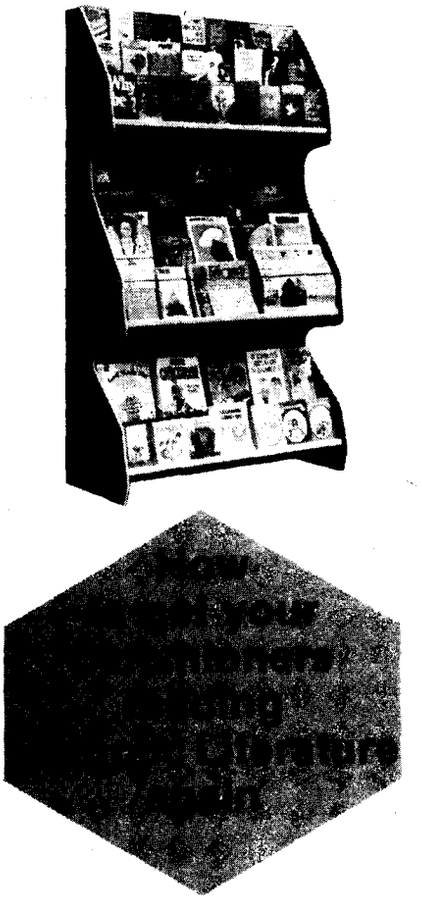
CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 739)

Everett, Wash.

To the Editors: Many thanks for the Raymond Schroth review of *The Taster's Guide to Beer* by Michael A. Weiner. Any additional information on that happiest of pasttimes is a welcome addition to any library.

However, I must take issue with the reviewer's final paragraph. For far too long have I had to endure the exaggerated claims of Fordham, Georgetown, Bonaventure, Holy Cross and that place in Indiana. Any person who has attended doubleheaders at the old "Garden" and then followed the crowds to Gilhooleys or Al Mullers, or done the Third Avenue bit from Joe Kings to the Lorelei, or followed the Green Wave on March 17th up Fifth and then down Third, or experienced the Boardwalk from Beach 98th to 116th at old



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Rockaway, or spent idyllic summers on the roads between Windham, Hendersonville, Cairo and East Durham can tell you that Father Schroth is mis-informed or has been subjected to the avalanche of publicity cranked out by the institutions in question. Veterans of the activities listed will attest that the best beer drinkers ever created are from Manhattan College with the followers from St. John's a distant second.

Yours in the continuing search for truth,

DAVID A. MCCOURT
Professor of History and Political Science
Everett Community College

Frankenstein's Monster

Park Forest, Ill.

To the Editors: Although there is no way to prove it, my guess is that the final paragraphs of your recent editorial [Oct. 14] on "The Senate and Energy" were composed by a certain Father Greeley. His (your?) espousal of the technological fix is no mortal sin, but the imperative that we not "retreat before" the problems of nuclear energy is a little too much. With equal logic we should learn to live with Frankenstein's monster, in the hope that it will run errands for us.

But, this is nothing. The least commendable and least justifiable aspect of this editorial was its unprovoked slap at the Clamshell Alliance. To associate this group with "the dark ages" and "knee-jerk opposition" is as fine a disservice to reality as anything you have printed before. I suspect that most members of the Clamshell Alliance (to which I do not belong) have given far more thought to the consequences and problems of nuclear energy than your guest editor has given to any serious matter. The questions the Alliance raises are not ones best answered by knee-jerk scare phrases but by a consideration of the staggering technological, military and economic problems associated with nuclear energy, the social matrix within which these problems must be solved, and the necessary role, in all this, of power-seeking, capricious, and, above all, fallible human beings.

W. F. WOLFF

Saxtons River, Vt.

To the Editors: To begin a protest with a grain of sympathy, it is ironic that your October 14th editorial on Senatorial and Executive energy acrobatics went to press just before the White House Advisory Council On Environmental Quality report came out, with its recommendation for a moratorium on building new nuclear plants until ways of protecting against reactor accidents, and of safely disposing of nuclear wastes, are discovered.

My protest is for the editorial writer's apparent unawareness of what goes on about energy issues in the boondocks, particularly the gratuitous pot shots of the last two paragraphs. The writer says "No one minimizes the dangers in nuclear-energy development" (not true) but seems to feel they are easily conquered.

He does nod to two evils in nuclear operation specified in the Council On Environmental Quality report, the ever-present danger of accident against which there is no protection, and the fact that radioactive wastes with long, long longevity are still piling up while there is still no known means of safe disposal. These two threats have recently come to greater public consciousness, not only among persons living in the shadow of Vermont Yankee and other plants. Some new angles have appeared, despite the sudden energetic efforts of nuclear industry public relations teams to "educate" the public on nuclear safety and economy. Open houses, speeches, the "Atom Man" brochure and other gimmicks have been followed by table games pitting beneficent, public spirited utility leaders against environmentalists. News has reported that one municipal electric company actually charged costs of buying and distributing the industry's "Energy Environment Game" to a Federal Power Commission account.

During the week your editorial appeared, at a public hearing conducted by the Vermont Board of Health in the state capital, one of the nuclear engineers who last year resigned from General Electric in protest, said that the life span of nuclear reactors, after which they must be dismantled, is likely to be fifteen years instead of forty. In fifteen years they become "too impermeated with radioactivity to permit proper maintenance." He thinks a "de facto moratorium," reflected in decreasing orders for nuclear plants, has already begun. Other reports quoted underscored the inability of nuclear operations to control unforeseen occurrences. A Ford Foundation report said that "Added safety features can introduce new risks of their own."

There is nothing "quaint" about solar energy nor about other sources of renewable energy. Such sources may be able to benefit life and environmental quality for a nation and world, not just for the small minority of people who can choose to live in relative self-sufficiency, growing food organically and harvesting their own fuel. The latter, though they be a peculiarly privileged group, do live in the late twentieth century, economically but not quaintly.

Is there a scrap of evidence that wind, water and solar power, to say nothing of the garbage power we have not yet tried in this country, cannot be developed on massive scale? Wind chargers for home electric generators were still common in the west into the second quarter of this century and windmills gave ample running water for cow barns and farmhouses within thirty miles of New York City. If even a fraction of funds which now support weaponry and nuclear projects were provided for alternative energy research and development, with our contemporary scientific knowledge and laboratories, we might live to see solar heaters on urban rooftops and windmills on the plains and in the sea.

The spontaneous growth of voluntary, concerned citizen groups should be cause for rejoicing. It is sad to confuse grass roots with "vigilante." In New England several organizations have arisen, some state-centered, some

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regional, some with individual focus, all concerned about nuclear dangers, all working in high degree of cooperation. The most sophisticated, the New England Coalition Against Nuclear Pollution, has made large achievements in few years. It has brought members of the general public, university scientists and distinguished participants in the legal profession together, for education and action. On shoestring contributions it has become a consultation and educational resource for more than this locality.

The Clamshell Alliance, at which your editorial takes a special swipe, began with young people who were joined by hundreds of others, kids to graybeards, in an open, well announced demonstration against beginning construction of the Seabrook plant. The Nuclear Regulatory Agency had given permission for ocean waters to be sucked in, heated and dumped back, on behalf of cooling towers. The Alliance (of which I am not a member) now intends to concentrate on anti-pollution education. New branches have sprung up across the country. The only "knee-jerking" at the non-violent Seabrook demonstration came from the Governor of New Hampshire and the *Manchester Union Leader* and their followers, at enormous cost to the New Hampshire budget.

MARJORIE MURPHY

Pittsburgh, Pa.

To the Editors: Your editorialist on "The Senate and Energy" cannot have read the *Foreign Affairs* article of a year ago, "Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken" by Amory B. Lovins. That piece, and his subsequent book, *Soft Energy Paths*, have changed the terms of the nuclear vs. anti-nuclear debate.

Your discussion of "quaint" alternatives "geared to life in another century" has no relevance to Mr. Lovins's discussion of the "soft" technologies—"flexible, resilient, sustainable and benign"—which match energy quality to end-use needs in a way that is impossible for the centralized, wasteful, capital intensive nuclear and other "hard" technologies.

The soft technologies, such as solar and organic conversion, wind-hydraulic systems, the recently developed fluidized-bed system for burning coal, as well as conservation and co-generation provide a diversified, diffused and more efficient answer to our energy future, according to Lovins. The hard technologies, including nuclear power, require vast expenditures of capital, enormous risks (not only environmental damage, nuclear proliferation, centralization, etc., but they may not be economically feasible). They are sure to produce, as Lovins predicts, "a world of subsidies, $100-billion bailouts, oligopolies, regulations, nationalization, eminent domain, corporate statism."

This note cannot begin to do justice to Mr. Lovins's brilliant analysis of all the major points in the hard vs. soft technology debate. I only ask that you present arguments that refute his careful, forceful logic, before you dismiss the Clamshell Alliance and other nuclear opponents as "knee-jerk." I'd hate to accuse *Commonweal* of being "knee-jerk nuke."

MOLLY RUSH
Director, The Thomas Merton Center

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Abigail McCarthy (con't)

to work in well-equipped torture chambers lined with modern acoustical tiles and spattered with blood, vomit, and urine." Laber tells of an Uruguayan army officer who smuggled out photographs of victims in whose torture he had participated. "He begged to be freed from 'this nightmare in which we are all prisoners'."

If torturers are dehumanized as they learn to deny any impulse to pity, sympathy, or compassion, must we not agree that we are equally dehumanized by knowing that torture exists and failing to act? Amnesty has succeeded in freeing thousands from imprisonment and torture because it focuses its efforts, eschews the abstract, and does not weary. We can aid its efforts and concentrate our own.

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Steinfels (Cont.)

stuck to the Democratic platform and Carter's campaign promises, the private government would have been far more likely to come to terms.

Carter has assumed that an uncompromisingly sound economy was the foundation of a decent egalitarianism. Is it time to consider the alternative—that an uncompromisingly decent egalitarianism may be the foundation of a sound economy?

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